PAUL AND MARY,

AN

INDIAN STORY.

Quos rami fructus, quos ipſa volentia rura
Sponte tulere ſua, carpſit: nec ferrea jura,
Inſanumque forum, aut populi tabularia vidit.

GEORG. VIRG.

DUBLIN:

PRINTED FOR MESSRS. P. BYRNE, GRUEBER,
AND M'ALISTER, J. JONES, J. MOORE,
AND WILLIAM JONES.

M,DCC,LXXXIX.

15
67
MAR

ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS ſtory has been lately publiſhed, amongſt other works of a very different nature, by M. de St. Pierre, who reſided in the country which it deſcribes, and was well acquainted with the principal facts. They are generally known in the Iſle of France, and by many perſons at Paris, where ſome individuals of Madame de la Tour's family ſtill exiſt. Its ornaments are — the landſcape — the climate — and the natural hiſtory of the Torrid Zone, obſerved with the eye of taſte, and delineated with the accuracy of philoſophical knowledge. It is a paſtoral, of which the fable and the machinery may be ſaid to be equally real.

To

To theſe are added, the enlarged views, the pure vein of moral inſtruction and the ſublime ideas of religion, which characterize the pen of M. de St. Pierre. The tranſlator feels a pleaſure in paying this homage to ſo amiable a writer; and it is only the beauty of his ſtyle that he mentions with unwillingneſs, as he has been ſo little able to infuſe it into his own.

The Linnæan names of animals and plants are added at the bottom of the page, where it ſeemed requiſite, and it could be done with tolerable certainty.

THE

THE

PREFACE.

IN this little work I have had ſome great objects in view. I have endeavoured to deſcribe a ſoil and productions different from thoſe which we have in Europe. Our poets had ſo long reclined their lovers upon the banks of rivulets, in green meadows, and under the ſhade of the beech, that I wiſhed to find a new ſcene for mine, upon the ſea-ſhore, at the foot of rocks, and overſhadowed

overſhadowed by palms, bananas, and flowering citron-trees.

If the other part of the world had produced poets like Theocritus and Virgil, we ſhould have had pictures of it as intereſting as thoſe of our own country. Travellers of taſte, it is true, have given us enchanting deſcriptions of ſome of the Southern Iſlands; but the manners of the inhabitants, and ſtill more thoſe of the Europeans who land there, often ſpoil the landſcape

To the natural beauties which are to be met with between the tropics, I wiſhed to join the moral beauty of a ſmall ſociety. I purpoſed alſo to ſet certain truths in a ſtrong light, and, amongſt others, the following—That our happineſs conſiſts in making nature and virtue

virtue the rule of our life.—I was not, however, obliged to inſert a fable, in order to repreſent the happineſs of families. I can with truth aſſert, that thoſe which I ſhall deſcribe have really exiſted, and that all the principal events of their hiſtory are true. They have been certified to me by many of the inhabitants, with whom I was acquainted in the Iſle of France. I have only added ſome indifferent circumſtances; and they, as they are perſonal, and relate to myſelf, have ſo far alſo a reality.

After I had made an imperfect ſketch of this little paſtoral, as it may be called, I deſired a lady who mixed with the faſhionable world, and ſome men who lived remote from it, to hear it read, that I might ſee the effect

fect it would have upon ſuch different characters. I had the ſatisfaction to find that they all ſhed tears. I could gather no further opinion of it from them, and indeed I deſired no other. But, as great preſumption is ſometimes the conſequence of inconſiderable talents, the ſucceſs I met with inſpired me with the vanity to give to my work the title of *Tableau de la Nature*. Fortunately for me, I reflected on the ſmall part of Nature's works which were known to me even in the climate in which I was born; I recollected her various, rich, beautiful, magnificent, myſterious productions, in thoſe countries which I only ſaw as a traveller, and felt my own want of obſervation, taſte, and power of language

to

to underſtand, and to deſcribe them. Theſe reflections determined me to include this feeble eſſay under the name and at the end of my *Etudes de la Nature*, which have been ſo favourably received by the public, hoping that the title, at the ſame time, that it made them recollect my inability, might remind them alſo of their indulgence.

PAUL

BRITISH MUSEUM
15
67
MAR

PAUL AND MARY.

ON the eaſtern ſide of the mountain which riſes behind the town of Port Lewis, in the *Iſle of France, are the remains of two ſmall cottages, upon a tract of ground which appears to have been formerly cultivated. They

* The Iſle of France is in latitude 20. 22. ſouth; longitude, from Paris, eaſt 54. 40. It is about 37 miles long, and 26 broad. It was firſt diſcovered by the Portugueſe, and was afterwards in the poſſeſſion of the Dutch; it was abandoned by them in 1712. The French, who had for ſome time inhabited the Iſle of Bourbon in its neighbourhood, em-

They are ſituated nearly in the center of a valley, incloſed on all ſides by high rocks, excepting only one paſſage to the North. From this opening is ſeen the town of Port Lewis on the left; and the mountain which lies at the back of it, called the † *Morne de la Decouverte*, from whence ſignals are given to ſuch veſſels as arrive at the port: on the right is an extenſive view of the diſtrict of Pamplemouſſe, the road which leads to it from the town, its church riſing amidſt rows of bamboo

braced this opportunity of encreaſing their ſettlement.

It ſeems, by the accounts of the Abbé de la Caille, and M de Bougainville, to reſemble Otaheite, and other iſlands in the Pacific Ocean. It is beautifully wooded, mountainous, rocky, and full of ſprings; is ſurrounded by a coral reef, and preſents many appearances of the volcanic kind.

The Bay of the Tomb, and the Cape of Misfortune, are mentioned by the Abbé de la Caille.

† The Mountain of Diſcovery.

67 MAR

boo plants in a vaſt plain, and foreſts which extend to the extremity of the iſland. Immediately in front is the Bay of the Sepulchre, of which the Cape, called the Unfortunate, forms one ſide; all beyond is open ſea, excepting a few iſlands lying level with the water, and the point of Mira, which ſtands in the waves like a baſtion.

At the entrance of this chaſm, from whence ſo many objects open to the view, the ſound of the winds which ſhake the foreſts, and of the waves which daſh upon the breakers, is continually repeated by the echoes of the mountain; but within, by the ſide of the cottages, no noiſe is heard, and nothing preſents itſelf to the view but the ſteep rocks which encompaſs the valley, the lofty woods which border them, and

the ſmaller trees which grow out of their clefts, and overhang their high tops. The rain, which is attracted by them, often reflects the colours of the rainbow upon the dark foliage of their ſides, and feeds the ſprings, which riſing at their baſe, form the little river Latana. All around is perfect ſtillneſs—the air, the light, the water, every thing is calm. The echoes ſcarcely return the ſound of the palm-trees which grow on the high cliffs, and whoſe ſtems are continually waving in the wind. A tender day lights the bottom of the valley, which the ſun does not reach till noon; but his firſt rays ſtrike upon the mountain, and its craggy points, riſing above the ſhade, glow with gold and purple upon the clear azure of the ſky. This ſpot, in which one may at once enjoy ſuch bound-

leſs

leſs views, and ſuch profound retirement, I often viſited with pleaſure.

One day, as I was ſitting by the cottages, and contemplating their decay, a man in years happened to paſs near them. He was, according to the cuſtom of the old inhabitants, dreſſed in a ſhort waiſtcoat and long trowſers, and he was without ſhoes. He ſupported himſelf with an ebony ſtick; a noble ſimplicity marked his countenance, and his hair was entirely white. I made a reſpectful bow to him; he returned it, and having conſidered me a moment, he came forwards, and placed himſelf by me, upon the bank where I was ſitting.

Encouraged by this appearance of confidence, I ventured to addreſs myſelf to him, and to aſk him if he knew by whom the two cottages

cottages had been formerly inhabited? "Twenty years ago," he anſwered, "theſe ruins, theſe waſte lands, were occupied by two families who had here found happineſs. Their ſtory is affecting; but in this iſland, which lies in the paſſage to the Indies, what European feels intereſted in the concerns of obſcure individuals? Not one amongſt them would even accept of a life of happineſs in this ſpot, with the condition of remaining poor and unknown.—Men only enquire into the hiſtory of kings and miniſters, which is of no uſe to any one."

"From your manner and converſation," I ſaid, "it is eaſy to perceive that you have had much experience of the world. If you have time, you will much oblige me, by relating what you know of the ancient inhabitants of this deſert;

deſert; and be aſſured that no man is ſo depraved by the commerce of the world, as not to hear with pleaſure of the happineſs that ariſes from ſimple nature and virtue." After leaning his head upon his hands for ſome time, and pauſing like one who is endeavouring to recollect occurrences long paſt, he gave me the following account.

In the year 1735, a young man, a native of Normandy, named M. de la Tour, after having ſolicited government for military employment, and his family for pecuniary aſſiſtance, and both equally in vain, reſolved to come and ſeek his fortune in this iſland. He had with him a young woman, whom he paſſionately loved, and who had for him an equal affection. She was of an ancient and opulent family in his province,

vince, and he had married her privately, and without portion, her relations being averſe to the alliance, becauſe he was not of noble extraction. He left her at Port Lewis in this iſland, and embarked for Madagaſcar, with the hope of buying ſome negroes, and of returning immediately hither to erect a dwelling. He landed at Madagaſcar in the unhealthy ſeaſon, which begins about the middle of October; and ſoon after his arrival he died of one of thoſe peſtilential fevers to which the climate is ſubject, and which will for ever hinder the Europeans from making any permanent eſtabliſhment upon the iſland. The effects he had brought with him were diſperſed after his death, as it generally happens to thoſe who die out of their own country.

His

His wife, who had remained in the Iſle of France, was now a widow, expecting ſoon to lie in; ſhe was in a country where ſhe had neither letters of credit, or of recommendation, and her whole property conſiſted of one female Negro. After loſing the man ſhe had ſo entirely loved, ſhe would ſolicit no aſſiſtance from any other, and misfortune ſeemed to give her courage: ſhe reſolved therefore, with the help of her negro, to cultivate a ſmall piece of ground, and endeavour by that means to procure a ſubſiſtence.

In an iſland almoſt deſert, the land of which was open to every body, ſhe did not enquire for the moſt fertile diſtricts, or thoſe moſt favourable to commerce; but ſeeking only, in the receſs of ſome mountain, a ſecret refuge, in which ſhe might live unknown and undiſturbed,

diſturbed, ſhe directed her ſteps to theſe rocks, and retired to them as a bird ſteals to its neſt. Diſtreſt and tender minds are ever, in their affliction, led by a ſort of inſtinct to take ſhelter in wild and deſerted ſpots, as if they expected that the rocks ſhould prove a rampart againſt misfortune, and the calm ſcenes of Nature give peace to the painful agitations of the ſoul.—But Providence, ever ready to yield us ſuccour, when our deſires are confined within juſt bounds, had reſerved for Madame de la Tour, a bleſſing, which neither rank nor riches can beſtow—A friend!

This ſpot had been inhabited for about a year by a kind and amiable woman, named Margaret; ſhe was the daughter of an honeſt farmer, and born in Brittany; beloved by her parents, and happy till ſhe placed a miſtaken confidence

dence in a gentleman who lived near them, who promiſed to marry her. He betrayed and deſerted her; he left her with child, and even refuſed to make any proviſion for the infant. She reſolved to quit her native village for ever, and to conceal her weakneſs in a diſtant colony; far removed from her own country, where ſhe had loſt her reputation: her only portion, an old negro, whom ſhe had bought with a ſmall ſum of borrowed money, aſſiſted her in the cultivation of a little corner of land in this place.

When Madame de la Tour, accompanied by her female ſlave, came to this ſpot, ſhe found Margaret here, who had not at that time weaned her child. It was a great ſatisfaction to her to meet with a woman in circumſtances which ſeemed ſo greatly to reſemble

ble her own. Madame de la Tour related, in few words, her paſt misfortunes and her preſent neceſſities. Margaret was much affected at the recital; and, deſiring rather to deſerve her friendſhip, than to acquire reſpect, ſhe acknowledged, without reſerve, the imprudence of which ſhe had been guilty: "As for me," ſaid ſhe, "I deſerved my fate—But you, madam, that have ever been diſcreet and virtuous, that you ſhould be unfortunate!" and with tears in her eyes ſhe offered her cottage and her ſervices. Madame de la Tour, touched with ſo kind a reception, embraced her, and ſaid, "I truſt that my ſufferings will now end, ſince Heaven has inſpired you with more compaſſion for me than I have ever found from my own relations."

I was

I was well acquainted with Margaret; for tho' I live in the woods, at the diſtance of a league and a half from this place, I conſidered myſelf as her neighbour. In the cities of Europe, a ſtreet, a ſingle wall, may hinder the individuals of the ſame family from having any intercourſe during whole years; but in a new colony, thoſe who are only ſeparated by woods and mountains think themſelves neighbours; at that time too, when the iſland had but little commerce with India, mere neighbourhood gave a title to friendſhip, and hoſpitality to ſtrangers was both a duty and a pleaſure. As ſoon as I heard that my neighbour had an inmate, I went to ſee her, that I might offer my aſſiſtance to them both.

Madame de la Tour had a very intereſting countenance, marked ſtrongly

ſtrongly with melancholy, and of much dignity. She was then near the time of her lying-in. I told the two ladies that it would be adviſeable, for the ſake of their children, but chiefly to prevent any other perſon from ſettling there, that they ſhould make a regular diviſion between them of the bottom of this valley, which contains about twenty acres.

They referred the diviſion of it to me, and I made the two lots as equal as I could. One comprehended the upper part of this encloſure, from that point of rock, now covered with clouds, where the river Latana riſes, to the deep cleft that is at the top of the mountain, and which is called the embraſure, becauſe it has ſome reſemblance to that part of fortification. The ſoil is ſo full of rocks and fiſſures that one can hardly walk

walk over it; yet it produces large trees, and is full of little ſtreams and ſprings. The other diviſion included the lower part, which extends along the banks of the river Latana, to the opening where we now are, through which it continues its courſe between two hills till it falls into the ſea. There are, it is true, in this lower part ſome ſlips of meadow-land, and ſome level ground; but it is ſcarcely any better than the other; for in the rainy ſeaſon it is marſhy, and in the dry months it is a ſtiff clay. If a trench is to be opened at that time, it is neceſſary to uſe a mattock.

After I had marked out the ground, I perſuaded the ladies to draw lots. The upper part fell to Madame de la Tour; the lower to Margaret; they were both perfectly ſatisfied with their ſhares; but de-

ſired

ſired me to contrive that their habitations might not be diſtant. " We muſt be together," ſaid they, " to help one another, and talk to one another." It was neceſſary for each, however, to have their ſeparate dwelling. Margaret's hut was in the middle of the valley, juſt upon the boundary of her own land. I cauſed another hut to be built cloſe by it, but upon the territory of Madame de la Tour; the two friends were therefore, as they had deſired, near one another, and yet each was upon her own domain. I myſelf cut rafters and brought them from the hill, and gathered leaves of the † viburnum upon the coaſt, to conſtruct the two dwellings, which have now neither door nor roof. But alas, there remains ſtill enough to bring back paſt

† Lantana Camara Linn.

paſt ſcenes, and nouriſh painful recollections! Time, which ſo rapidly deſtroys the monuments of empires, has, in this deſert, reſpected thoſe of friendſhip, to perpetuate regrets, which can never end but with my life.

The ſecond hut was ſcarcely finiſhed before Madame de la Tour was brought-to-bed of a daughter. I had been godfather to Margaret's child, who was called Paul: Madame de la Tour deſired me, conjointly with her friend, to name her little girl.—Margaret choſe the name of Mary. "I truſt ſhe will be happy," ſaid Margaret, "for ſhe will be virtuous; I did not know misfortune whilſt I continued ſo."

By the time that Madame de la Tour had recovered her lying-in, the two dwellings began to be a little comfortable; partly by means of

of the aſſiſtance which I gave from time to time, but more particularly from the unremitted labour of their ſlaves. Domingo, which was the name of Margaret's negro, was a *Jallof black, and though advanced in years, was ſtrong and able to work; he had a great ſhare of natural good ſenſe, and had had much experience in the cultivation of land. He worked equally upon both the territories; chooſing the moſt fertile ſpots, and putting in the ſeeds and plants which ſeemed moſt adapted to the different ſoils. He ſowed the poor land with millet and maize; the beſt he reſerved for a little wheat: in the low and marſhy part

* Of the kingdom of Oualo, of which the iſland of Senegal makes a part; between the rivers Niger and Gambia. M. Adanſon ſays they are above the middle ſize, well made, humane, and hoſpitable.

part he generally had a crop of rice, and at the foot of the hill he put gourds, and pompions, and cucumbers to climb over the rocks; he planted * batates in the dry ground, where they ſucceed beſt and are ſweeteſt; cotton-trees upon the heights; ſugar-canes in the ſtrong ſoils; ſlips of coffee upon the hills, where the grain is ſmall, but of excellent flavour; along the river and by the huts, bananas, which give a thick ſhade, and produce long ſtrings of fruit in all the ſeaſons of the year; and a few roots of tobacco to charm their cares. He cut wood for them upon the hills, and levelled ſome of the rougheſt places amongſt the rocks, in order to open ways to the different parts of the farm.

He

* Convolvulus Batatas, Lin.

He did all this with intelligence, and with aſſiduity, becauſe he had the intereſt of the family at heart. He was very much attached to his miſtreſs, and almoſt equally ſo to Madame de la Tour, whoſe negro ſlave he had married ſoon after the birth of Mary; her name was Frances, and he tenderly loved her: ſhe came from Madagaſcar, where ſhe had, amongſt other little trades, learned the art of making baſkets, and a ſtuff called pagnes, with a ſort of reed, which is found in the woods of this country. She was handy, neat, and perfectly honeſt and faithful. She prepared the dinner, took care of the poultry, and from time to time went to Port Lewis to ſell the ſuperfluities of the two families; which were however very inconſiderable. If you will add to theſe, two goats, which had been brought up with the

the children, and a great dog who guarded them at night, you will have a perfect idea of the whole ſtock and revenue of the two little farms.

As for the two ladies, they were continually employed in ſpinning cotton; and their work was a ſufficient proviſion for themſelves and their families; but they were ſo deſtitute of all foreign commodities, that they only put on ſhoes once in the week, when they went to maſs, which they did early every Sunday, at the church or Pamplemouſſe, that you ſee in the diſtance. It is not ſo near as the church of Port Lewis; but they ſeldom went to the town, from the fear of being treated with contempt, as their dreſs was only of the common blue cloth of India, ſuch as is worn by the ſlaves. After all, however, a little outward reſpect is not to be put

put in competition with domeſtic comfort. If the ladies ſuffered ſome mortifications abroad, they returned to their home with the greater ſatisfaction. As ſoon as Frances and Domingo perceived them, from this eminence, returning back upon the Pamplemouſſe road, they ran down to meet them, and to help them to mount the hill. At their farm they found a neat dwelling, and ſervants equally affectionate and induſtrious; and they enjoyed perfect liberty, and many of the conveniencies of life, which were purchaſed by their own labour. Themſelves, united by the ſame neceſſities, by a ſimilarity in their misfortunes, and calling one another by the endearing names of friend, companion, ſiſter; they had but one will, one intereſt, one table—every thing was in common between them. And if former affec-

tions,

tions, more warm than thoſe of friendſhip, were ſometimes awakened in their hearts, a pure religion, and chaſte morals, directed their thoughts to another life—as the flame riſes towards heaven, when it has no longer any nouriſhment upon earth.

The duties of nature added alſo to the happineſs of their little ſociety. Their mutual friendſhip was increaſed by their children—the offspring of love which had been equally fortunate. They had a pleaſure in putting them together into the ſame bath and the ſame cradle, and ſometimes each mother gave ſuck to the child of her friend. "My dear Margaret," Madame de la Tour uſed to ſay, "we have each two children, and each of our children has two mothers." The buds that remain upon two trees of the ſame ſpecies, which have

have loſt their branches by a ſtorm, produce ſweeter fruit, if each is taken from its native plant and grafted upon its neighbour; and theſe two little ones, deprived of their relations, imbibed ſentiments more tender than thoſe of ſon and daughter, of brother and ſiſter, when the two friends who bore them changed their milk. Their mothers began to talk of marrying them whilſt they rocked their cradles; and this proſpect of happineſs for them, with which they ſolaced their own afflictions, often ended in tears—one calling to mind all the evils which ſhe had endured from the broken promiſe of her marriage; the other, the misfortunes which had followed the conſummation of hers.—One, lamenting the unhappineſs of a connection which was above her own rank in life; the other, reflect-

reflecting on the conſequences of her having deſcended below it. But they comforted themſelves with thinking that one day their children, more fortunate than themſelves, and far removed from Europe and its cruel prejudices, would enjoy the ſweets of love, and the bleſſings of equality.

The two children began, in their earlieſt infancy, to ſhew for each other a very extraordinary attachment. Paul, in his moſt paſſionate crying, was pacified as ſoon as he ſaw Mary; if ſhe was hurt, they had immediate notice of it by his ſcreams; and the ſweet child often concealed her pain, that Paul might not grieve for her. I never came here, that I did not ſee both of them naked, according to the cuſtom of the country, when they could hardly walk, holding one another by the hands and under the

arms, like the figures which repreſent the conſtellation of the twins. At night even they were not ſeparated; and they were generally found lying cheek to cheek, and breaſt to breaſt; their little hands about each other's neck, and aſleep in one another's arms.

When they could ſpeak, the firſt names they learnt to give each other, were thoſe of brother and ſiſter. If infancy has more tender careſſes, it has no names more fond. Their education ſtill ſerved to increaſe their affection, by directing it to their mutual wants. Very ſoon, all neat work, and whatever regarded their domeſtic arrangements, or their little ruſtic entertainments, became the employment of Mary, and ſhe was always rewarded with the admiration and careſſes of her brother. As for him, he was continually in motion; he dug in the gar-

garden with Domingo, or followed him to the hill with a hatchet to cut wood; and if by the way he ſaw a beautiful flower, or any fine fruit, or a neſt of birds, he would ſcale the higheſt tree to get them for his ſiſter. Whenever you ſaw one of them, you might be ſure that the other was not far off. One, day as I was coming down the hill, I ſaw Mary running towards the houſe, with her frock turned over her head, to keep off a hard ſhower of rain. At a diſtance, I thought ſhe had been alone; but when I came up to her, I found that ſhe had Paul with her under the ſame ſhelter, and both were ſmiling at the umbrella which they had invented.—Their lovely faces under this hood, brought to my mind the two children of Leda, as they are repreſented in the ſame ſhell.

Their whole ſtudy was how to

 pleaſe

pleaſe and to help one another. As to the reſt, they were, like other Creoles, entirely ignorant, and not able to write or read. They were perfectly indifferent as to what had happened in other times and in remote regions; their curioſity was bounded by their own mountains: the extremity of their iſland was for them the end of the world, and they did not imagine that any place was more agreeable than that which they inhabited. Their affection for each other, and for their mothers, employed all the energy of their hearts. No uſeleſs ſcience had ever made their tears flow; no tedious leſſons of morality had ever wearied them. They did not know that it was forbid to rob, becauſe the had every thing in common; nor that temperance was a duty, for of ſimple meats they eat what they choſe. They were never told not to lie,

for

for they had nothing to conceal. The puniſhments that Heaven prepares for diſobedient children, had never been held out to them; filial duty, in them, had been produced by maternal affection. What they knew of religion, had inſpired them with a love for it; and, if they did not offer up long prayers at church, wherever they were, in the fields, or woods, or in the houſe, they raiſed their innocent hands to Heaven, and hearts full of affection for their parents. So paſſed their infancy, like the beautiful dawn of a fine day.

They began now to ſhare the houſehold cares with their mothers. As ſoon as the cock announced the firſt light, Mary aroſe and went to the neighbouring ſpring for water, to prepare the breakfaſt. Soon after, when the ſun began to gild the tops of the mountains, Margaret and her

ſon

ſon came to Madame de la Tour's; they all ſaid a prayer together, and then made their firſt meal: they often eat it before the door, ſitting upon the graſs, under a canopy of bananas, whoſe firm fruit furniſhed food ready prepared, and its long ſhining leaves ſerved as linen for the table.

Nouriſhed with a wholeſome and ſucculent diet, the two children grew rapidly, and, from the mildneſs of their education, their countenances expreſſed nothing but placid content and innocence. When Mary was but twelve years old, her ſhape began to be formed, long golden treſſes adorned her head, and her coral lips and blue eyes added a mild luſtre to the clear bloom of her complexion; they were animated with ſmiles when ſhe ſpoke; but when ſhe was ſilent, they ſeemed naturally to turn towards Heaven,

which

which gave them an expreſſion of great ſenſibility, and even a ſlight ſhade of melancholy. Paul, ſtill poſſeſſing all the graces of adoleſcence, began to take a manly form and character. He was taller than Mary, his ſkin browner, his noſe more aquiline, and his eyes, which were black, would perhaps have had too much fire, if the fringe of his long eyelaſhes had not ſoftened it. Though he was always in motion, as ſoon as his ſiſter appeared he was ſtill, and went to ſit down by her; their meal was often began and ended without having ſpoken a word. From their ſilence their unaffected attitudes, and the beauty of their naked feet, one might have ſuppoſed them to be an antique group, repreſenting two of the children of Niobe in white marble; but their looks, their ſweet ſmiles, gave one an idea of ſome imagi-

imaginary beings, ſome happy ſpirits, whoſe nature is love, and who are able to expreſs friendſhip and affection without the help of words.

Madame de la Tour's tenderneſs for her daughter increaſed as ſhe grew up, and ſhe became more anxious about her as her beauty unfolded. She often ſaid to me, "What would become of Mary, if I were to die, deſtitute as ſhe is of fortune?"

She had a maiden aunt in France, a woman of quality, rich, old, and a devotee, who had ſo unfeelingly refuſed to give her any kind of aſſiſtance when ſhe married Monſieur de la Tour, that ſhe had determined never again to have recourſe to her, to whatever extremity ſhe might be reduced; but now become a mother, parental affection made her willing to riſk the mortification of being refuſed. She wrote

wrote to her aunt, and gave her an account of the loſs of her huſband, the birth of her daughter, and of the preſent diſtreſs of her ſituation, in a foreign country, without any means of ſupport, and having a child to provide for; but ſhe received no anſwer. Madame de la Tour poſſeſſed great firmneſs of mind; and now, above feeling humbled by the reproaches of a relation, who had never forgiven her for marrying a man of an obſcure family; ſhe took every opportunity of writing to her, with the hope of obtaining ſome advantage for Mary; but many years paſſed away, and no notice was taken of her letters.

At length, in the year 1746, when Monſieur de la Bourdonaye, who had been made Governor, landed at the iſland, Madame de la Tour heard that he had a letter to deliver to her from her aunt. She

hurried directly to Port Lewis, and, attentive only to her daughter's intereſts, ſhe thought not then of her dreſs and appearance. M. de la Bourdonaye gave her the letter; which ſaid, that ſhe deſerved her fate for marrying an adventurer, whoſe paſſions and ill conduct had brought their puniſhment with them; and his premature death was to be conſidered as a juſt judgment upon her; that ſhe did well to remain in the colonies, rather than to return and diſhonour her family in France; but, after all, ſhe was in a flouriſhing ſettlement, where thoſe who were induſtrious never failed to make fortunes. After reproaching her niece, ſhe concluded with applauding herſelf, who had perſiſted in continuing ſingle, ſhe ſaid to avoid the unhappy conſequences which may generally be expected from marriage. The truth howe-

ver

ver was, that, being very ambitious, ſhe would not marry into any family that was not of high equality; and though ſhe was rich, and that riches alone are regarded at court, no man of rank had been inclined to an alliance with a woman ſo little agreeable in her perſon, and of a temper ſo unamiable.

She added, by way of poſtſcript, that, notwithſtanding every thing, ſhe had very ſtrongly recommended her to M. de la Bourdonaye.—She had indeed mentioned her to him; but, according to a cuſtom, which is now very common, and which renders a friend more formidable than an open enemy, in order to juſtify her own hard treatment of her niece, her expreſſions, under the colour of pity, were in fact calumnies.

Madame de la Tour, whom no unprejudiced perſon could ſee without

out being intereſted, and feeling a reſpect for her, was received by M. de la Bourdonaye with great coolneſs, as he was ſtill under the influence of thoſe accounts which he had received from her aunt. When ſhe explained to him her ſituation, and that of her daughter, he only in monoſyllables—"We ſhall ſee—We ſhall conſider of it—In time, perhaps—There are ſo many who are in diſtreſſed circumſtances—It was a pity that you diſobliged a reſpectable relation—You were certainly in the wrong." Madame de la Tour returned home, her ſpirits quite ſunk with diſappointment, and, in bitterneſs of heart, ſhe threw the letter upon the table, and ſaid, "There, my dear friend! is what I have obtained by eleven years of perſeverance." But, as Madame de la Tour was the only perſon in the houſe that could read, ſhe took up the letter again,

again, and read it aloud to all the family, who happened to be aſſembled there. She had ſcarcely finiſhed, when Margaret eagerly exclaimed, "We want nothing of your relations—our heavenly father has not forſaken us! Let us truſt in him; hitherto we have lived here happily. Why are you ſo diſcouraged?" But ſeeing Madame de la Tour in tears, ſhe threw her arms about her neck and preſſing her to her boſom—"My deareſt friend! my deareſt friend! ſhe cried; and a paſſion of tears prevented her from ſaying any more. Mary ſeeing them in this diſtreſs, preſſed their hands to her lips and to her heart, and wetted them with her tears. Paul's eyes were inflamed with rage; he bit his lips, and ſtamped with his feet, not knowing how to give vent to his paſſion. Hearing ſounds of diſtreſs, Frances and Domingo

mingo ran in, and now there was an univerſal lamentation throughout the houſe. "My dear lady!—my kind miſtreſs!—my dear mama!—don't weep, don't be grieved." So many tender marks of friendſhip diſſipated the ſorrow of Madame de la Tour. She took Paul and Mary in her arms, and, with an expreſſion of pleaſure and ſatisfaction in her countenance, ſaid, "Dear children! you are the cauſe of my grief; but you are all my comfort. Oh! my dear children! ſorrow came to me from afar; but happineſs is hear at home, and preſent to me." Neither Paul nor Mary underſtood what ſhe ſaid; but when they ſaw her compoſed, they ſmiled and kiſſed her. The two families continued to live their uſual happy life, and this cloud paſſed over, only like a ſtorm in ſummer.

The children were continually ſhew-

ſhewing freſh inſtances of their amiable diſpoſitions. One day, whilſt their mothers were gone to maſs at the church of Pamplemouſſe, as was their cuſtom on Sunday morning, with the firſt dawn, they found a Mulatto ſlave under the bananas which ſurrounded their habitation. She was worn to a ſkeleton, and had nothing to cover her but a piece of ſackcloth round her waiſt. She fell on her knees at the feet of Mary, who was going to prepare breakfaſt for the family, and implored her to take compaſſion on a fugitive ſlave. "I have wandered a month," ſaid ſhe, "in theſe deſerts, famiſhed with hunger, and often purſued by hunters and their dogs. I made my eſcape from my maſter, who is a wealthy planter upon the banks of the Black River. I now bear the marks of his cruelty to me; you may

may ſtill ſee upon my ſhoulders the deep ſcars and wounds which have been made by his ſtripes. In my deſpair I ſhould have deſtroyed myſelf; but, having heard of the family that lived here, I ſaid to myſelf, if there is yet any humanity to be found amongſt the white inhabitants of the iſland, I will reſolve to live a little longer."

Mary, moved with her ſtory, endeavoured to comfort her, and gave her the breakfaſt ſhe had been preparing for the family, which ſhe eagerly devoured. When the cravings of hunger were ſatisfied, Mary told her that ſhe was inclined to go with her to her maſter, and try to procure her pardon, and aſked her, if ſhe would ſhew her the way to his plantation. "I am ſure," ſaid ſhe, "that your maſter will be touched with compaſſion for you, when he ſees you."

you." "I will go any where with you," ſhe anſwered, "for you ſeem an angel from heaven."

Mary called her brother to go with them, and the Mulatto conducted them over rocks and mountains, thro' thick woods, and to the ſhores of broad rivers, which they were obliged to ford. At length, towards noon, they came down a ſteep hill to the banks of the Black River, where they found a large houſe, extenſive plantations, and a number of ſlaves employed in various kinds of work. Their maſter was walking about amongſt them, with a pipe in his mouth, and a ratan in his hand. He was a tall hard-favoured man, of a dark complexion, with his eyes ſunk in his head, and large black eye-brows.

Mary, trembling with fear, and holding by her brother's arm, went up

up to him, and entreated him, for the love of Heaven, to pardon his poor ſlave, who was following them at a little diſtance. The planter did not at firſt much attend to two children meanly dreſſed; but when he had obſerved the elegant form of Mary, and, under a coarſe blue hoood, ſeen her beautiful fair hair; when he had heard the ſoft ſound of her voice, which faltered when ſhe ſpoke to him; he took his pipe out of his mouth, and, lifting up his retan in the air, he ſwore, with a horrid imprecation, that he granted a pardon to his ſlave, not for the love of Heaven, but for the love of her.

Upon this encouragement, Mary made ſigns to the Mulatto, to come forward to her maſter, and then ran directly away, and Paul after her. They purſued their road together, up the hill which they had come down;

down; and when they had gained the ſummit, they ſat down under a tree, quite overcome with fatigue, and thirſt, and want of food. They had been walking from ſun-riſe, and had travelled five leagues without taking any nouriſhment. "You muſt be faint with hunger, my dear ſiſter," ſaid Paul; "we ſhall find nothing to ſatisfy it here; let us go back to the planter, and deſire that he will give us ſomething to eat." "Oh no!" ſhe anſwered, "I felt too much afraid of him to return—and remember my mother's proverb—"The bread of the wicked does not proſper." "What ſhall we do then, my dear ſiſter? theſe trees bear no good fruit; there is not even a tamarind or a citron to refeſh you." "Let us truſt in the providence of God," ſhe anſwered; "the young ravens cry to him for food, and he hears

hears them." She had hardly pronounced the words, when they heard the ſound of water, falling from a neighbouring rock; they went immediately to it, and, after having drank of the clear ſtream, they eat ſome creſſes which they gathered upon its banks.

Whilſt they were ſearching for ſome more ſolid nouriſhment, Mary perceived amongſt the foreſt-trees a young palmetto. The heart or cabbage, which grows amongſt the leaves at the top of this tree, is a good food; but tho' the ſtem was not thicker than a man's leg, it was ſixty feet high. The wood is only compoſed of long fibres; but the texture is ſo hard, that it reſiſts the ſharpeſt hatchet—Paul had not even a knife. At length the idea of ſetting fire to it ſuggeſted itſelf to him; but the want of a ſteel was another

another difficulty; and indeed I believe that in this iſland, as full as it is of rock, there is ſcarcely a flint to be found. Invention is the offspring of neceſſity, and we owe ſome of our moſt uſeful diſcoveries to men who have been in diſtreſs. Paul at laſt tried the method which the negroes uſe to produce fire. With the ſharp point of a ſtone he drilled a hole in the dry branch of a tree, which he kept down with his feet; and then ſharpening the end of a ſtick equally dry, but of a different ſpecies of wood, and putting the point into the hole, he twirled the ſtick rapidly between the palms of his hands (as we uſe a mill for chocolate) and in a few moments he ſaw ſome ſparks, and a little ſmoke riſe from the point of contact. He then collected dry graſs and branches of trees, and ſet them on fire under

under the palmetto, which ſoon fell with great force. The fire was now of uſe to diveſt the cabbage of its long prickly leaves and fibres. They eat part of it raw, and the reſt they roaſted in the aſhes, and in both ways it appeared to them equally delicious. They made their little frugal repaſt with great delight, from the ſenſe of having been employed in an act of benevolence; but their pleaſure was interrupted by an apprehenſion that their long abſence would cauſe ſome alarm to their mothers. Mary was continually expreſſing this anxiety; Paul, who felt reſted and refreſhed, aſſured her that they ſhould ſoon get home, and remove all their fears.

After dinner, however, they were involved in freſh difficulties. —They had no longer any guide to conduct them home; but Paul had

had never any apprehenſions, and he encouraged his ſiſter to ſet out; telling her, that he knew the ſituation of their dwelling; that it was to the mid-day ſun, and that he ſhould find his way over the Mountain with Three Points, which they had croſſed in the morning, and which lay before them. This mountain, is called the Mountain with Three Breaſts, becauſe the three points have that form. They deſcended the north ſide of the Black River hill; but after half an hour's walk, they were ſtopped by a broad river which intercepted their way. This large diſtrict of the iſland, which is covered with wood, is ſo little known, even to this day, that many of its rivers and mountains have yet no name. The river which ſtopped them, is a very rapid ſtream, that runs over a bed

a bed of rock. Mary, terrified by the roaring of the water, was afraid to ford it. Paul took her upon his back; "Do not be afraid," ſaid he, as he carried her over the ſlippery ſtones, "when you are with me, I feel my ſtrength increaſed; and if the planter upon the Black River had refuſed your petition, I ſhould have fought with him." "Alas!" ſaid Mary, "I expoſed you then to a wicked and a powerful enemy—I brought you into danger! How difficult it is to do good!"

After Paul had croſſed the river, he continued his way with his ſiſter upon his back, in hopes to carry her up the mountain of Three Breaſts, which was at the diſtance of about half a league; but his ſtrength ſoon failed, and he was obliged to ſet her down, and to take reſt. Mary, finding

that

that the day was far advanced, and that ſhe was too much fatigued to go any farther, perſuaded Paul, who was ſtill able to walk, to leave her, and return home by himſelf to calm the apprehenſions of their mothers. Paul would not quit her. "If the night ſhould overtake us," ſaid he, "I will light a fire, and burn down ſome palmettos; you ſhall eat the cabbage, and of the long leaves I will make a ſhelter for you."

Mary, however, after having taken a little reſt, gathered from the trunk of an old tree, which bent over the river, ſome thick leaves of * Spleenwort, which hung from the ſtem, and made them into a ſort of buſkin to bind round her feet, which were cut

* Aſplenium Scolopendrium, Linn.

with the ſtones; for in her eagerneſs to ſerve the poor ſlave, ſhe had forgot to put on her ſhoes. The coolneſs of the leaves relieved the pain; and, having broken a branch of bamboo for a ſtick, ſhe took that in one hand, and with the other leaned upon her brother, and in this manner they gently continued their way through the woods; but from the heighth of the trees, and the thickneſs of their foliage, they ſoon loſt ſight of the Mountain of Three Breaſts, which had been their guide, and even of the ſun, which was now near ſetting.

After ſome time, they had, without perceiving it, loſt the track which they had followed before, and found themſelves in a labyrinth of wood, and climbing plants, and rocks, through which they ſaw no path. Paul deſired Mary

to ſit down, whilſt he impatiently ran firſt one way and then the other, to find ſome opening through the thicket; but he toiled in vain. He climbed up a high tree, in hopes at leaſt to ſee the Mountain of Three Breaſts, which had hitherto been their direction; but he could perceive nothing round him, excepting the tops of trees, which were illuminated by the laſt rays of the ſetting ſun. The long ſhadows of the hills already ſpread acroſs the valley; the wind was ſunk; a profound ſilence reigned in the ſolitary deſert; and no ſound was heard but the braying of ſtags, which came to ſeek ſhelter for the night in theſe remote foreſts. With the hope that ſome hunter might poſſibly hear him, Paul began to call with a loud voice, "Come to ſuccour Mary!"----but he was anſwered

only by the echoes, which repeated her name. He deſcended from the tree, overcome with fatigue and diſappointment, and began to conſider what methods ſhould be taken for paſſing the night there; but he found that there was no fountain near, no palmettos, and ſcarcely any dry ſticks to make a fire—all his reſources ſeemed to fail him; and, oppreſſed with the ſenſe of their perilous ſituation, he could not refrain from tears. "Be comforted," ſaid Mary, "your diſtreſs increaſes mine. I am the cauſe of all that we both ſuffer, and I muſt doubly feel it. I have alſo to reproach myſelf for all the anxiety and apprehenſion which our mothers are now ſuffering at home. We ſhould not undertake, even what we think right, without conſulting them, and I have

acted

acted very imprudently; but let us pray to the Almighty, and he will have compaſſion on us."

Soon after they had finiſhed their prayer, they heard a dog bark: "It is the dog of ſome hunter," ſaid Paul, "who comes to lie in wait for the deer at night." "It is impoſſible," anſwered Mary, "that we can be ſo near home, and that this can be the foot of our own mountain; but yet, I think I know the tone, and that it is our own Tayo that barks." In fact, it was Tayo, and in a moment after he was at their feet, and leaping up, and fawning upon them. Before they had recovered the ſurpriſe of ſeeing the dog, they perceived Domingo running towards them.--- The good old negro cried for joy that he had found them, and they only anſwered him with

their

their tears; none of them could ſpeak.

When Domingo was a little compoſed, he told them how much their mothers had been alarmed at their abſence. "I attended them to church," ſaid he, "and nothing could exceed their aſtoniſhment, when they returned and did not find you at home; we enquired of Frances where you were gone, but ſhe had been employed within, and could give no account of you. I ran firſt to one place and then to another, not knowing which way to go. At length, * I took ſome of your cloaths, and made Tayo ſmell

* This inſtance of ſagacity in Domingo, and his dog Tayo, greatly reſembles that which is related of the ſavage Téwéniſſa, and his dog Oniah, by M. de Crevecœur, in a work written with the moſt benevolent views, intitled, Lettres d'un Cultivateur Américain.

ſmell to them; he immediately began to queſt upon your foot-ſteps, as if he had underſtood what I meant, and he followed the ſcent till he led me to the Black River; there, I heard from one of the inhabitants, that you had brought back a runaway mulatto in the morning, and that you had obtained her pardon——but ſuch a pardon! I ſaw her chained by the leg to a block of wood, and with a three-ſpiked collar about her neck. From thence Tayo traced you to the top of the hill by the Black River, where he ſtopped and barked as loud as he could; it was near a ſpring; there were ſome aſhes ſtill ſmoking, and the ſtem of a young palmetto lying on the ground; from the hill, he at length conducted me hither. We are now at the foot of the Three-breaſted Mountain,

and

and four long leagues from home. Take ſome of the refreſhments I have brought, to reſtore your ſtrength, and then let us be gone." They eat ſome biſcuits and fruit, and drank ſome liquor made of wine, and lemon juice, and ſpices, with which their mothers had filled a large gourd.

Mary grieved for the fate of the poor ſlave, and lamented many times, ſighing, that it was ſo difficult to do good!

During their repaſt, Domingo ſearched the rocks for a twiſted kind of plant called round-wound, which has the remarkable property of burning whilſt it is green, and giving a conſiderable light; of this he made a flambeau, for it was already dark. But there was a much greater difficulty to encounter than what aroſe from the night; for Paul and his ſiſter were both

both ſo much fatigued, and their feet ſo ſwelled and ſore, that they could not walk any farther. Domingo was doubtful whether he ſhould leave them by themſelves, and go in ſearch of ſome aſſiſtance to carry them home, or whether he ſhould ſtay and paſs the night with them in the ſpot where they were: "I remember the time," ſaid he, "when I carried you both in my arms at once, but now you are grown up, and I am become old."

Whilſt he was in this perplexity what to do, a party of mulattoes paſſed within a few yards of them. The chief of the troop came up to Paul and Mary, and ſaid, "Be not afraid, good little Europeans; we ſaw you paſs this morning with one of the Black River ſlaves; you went to implore her hard maſter to pardon her. In gratitude

tude to you for the humanity you ſhewed to our countrywoman, we will carry you home upon our ſhoulders." He then called to four of the ſtrongeſt of his followers; they contrived a ſort of litter, with branches of trees and withes, and, having placed Paul and Mary upon it, they took it upon their ſhoulders; and Domingo going before with his lighted branch, they ſet out amidſt the acclamations of all the troop. "You ſee, my dear brother," ſaid Mary, "that Heaven leaves no good action unrewarded."

It was midnight when they arrived at the foot of their own mountain. They ſaw ſeveral fires burning at the top of it; and before they had aſcended half way, they heard voices calling out, "Is it you, my children; is it you?" The negroes and all anſwered with

with one voice, " Yes! here we are—here we are!" and they ſoon ſaw their mothers and Frances coming towards them with fire-brands in their hands.

" My dear, dear children!" ſaid Madame de la Tour, " what agonies of mind we have ſuffered during your abſence! Where have you been?" " We went to the Black River," anſwered Mary, " to ſolicit the pardon of a run-away mulatto. She came this morning to us, almoſt famiſhed with hunger; I gave her our breakfaſt, and then went with her to her maſter; and now ſome of her countrymen have brought us home on their ſhoulders."

Madame de la Tour took her in her arms, but could not ſpeak; and Mary, who felt her cheek wetted by her mother's tears, ſaid, " I am amply repaid for all that I have

have endured." Margaret, tranſported with pleaſure, preſſed Paul to her boſom, calling him her dear child, and rejoicing that he had been employed in a kind action.

As ſoon as they arrived at home, they provided ſome ſupper for the mulattoes, who made a hearty meal; and then wiſhing all poſſible proſperity and happineſs to the family, they took their leave, and returned again to their woods.

Every day, to the inhabitants of theſe little dwellings, was a day of peace and happineſs. They were never tormented by envy or ambition, and the vain and empty fame of the world, obtained ſo often by cabal, and loſt by calumny, had never been the object of their wiſhes. The teſtimony of their own conſcience was ſufficient to them, and they had no judge of their

their actions but themſelves. In this iſland, as in moſt other European ſettlements, curioſity is only excited by tales of ſcandal; and as for them, their names even, as well as their virtues, were unknown. If by chance a traveller, on the road to Pamplemouſſe, enquired of the inhabitants of the plain, who lived in the two cottages upon the hill? they anſwered, though not perſonally acquainted with the families, "they belonged to worthy people."—The violet ſpreads its perfume to a diſtance, though it lies hid amongſt the buſhes.

In their converſation, they admitted not of ſlander, which, under a pretence of juſtice, neceſſarily diſpoſes the mind to hatred or to falſehood; for it is impoſſible not to hate thoſe whom you think wicked, or to live with them, and not

not conceal that hatred, under the appearance of friendſhip: ſlander muſt therefore neceſſarily ſet us at variance with our neighbours, or with ourſelves. They, however, without judging of any individuals in particular, were only occupied with the means of doing good to all in general; which, though their power was limited, gave them a benevolence of heart, that was always ready to expand: and ſo far were they from having grown ſavage in their ſolitary life, their tempers had become more gentle and humane. If the hiſtory of the crimes and follies of mankind made no part of their converſation, that of nature was a ſource of continual delight and joy to them. They adored the hand of Providence, which had directed their labours, and produced amongſt their barren rocks, plenty, beauty,

and

and all thoſe pure and ſimple pleaſures which never cloy.

Paul, at twelve years old, more robuſt and more intelligent than an European at 15, had embelliſhed what Domingo had only cultivated. He went with him to the neighbouring wood, to take up young orange and citron trees; tamarinds, whoſe round heads are of ſuch lively green; and * annonans, whoſe fruit is full of a ſweet and milkly juice, and its flavour like the preſume of the orange-flower. He planted ſome of conſiderable ſize round the incloſure, and ſowed ſeeds of ſuch trees as bear fruit the ſecond year—like the † agathis, whoſe long white flowers hang round it in cluſters, and reſemble the cryſtal drops of a luſtre; the lilac of Perſia, which bears

* Annona aſiatica Linn.

† Æſchynomeue grandiflora Linn.

bears aloft its ſpiral garlands of a ſoft grey; the ‡ papayer, whoſe undivided ſtem, ſtudded with green fruit, reſembles a rough column, of which the capital is compoſed of large leaves like thoſe of the fig-tree.

He planted alſo ſeeds and kernels of * badamiers, mangos, † Perſiau-bay, ‡ guava, § bread fruit, and ‖ pome-roſe; and already enjoyed their fruit and ſhade. His laborious hands had made many of the moſt barren ſpots of the territory fertile: many ſpecies of the aloe; the ǂ Indian fig, loaded with flowers of yellow, ſtreaked with red; and the

‡ Carica Papaya Linn.
* Illicium anifatum Linn.
† Laurus Perſica Linn.
‡ Pſydium pyriforum Linn.
§ Artocarpus Linn.
‖ Eugenia Iambos Linn.
ǂ Cactus opuntia Linn.

the prickly cereuſes began to appear above the dark points of the rocks, ſtretching their heads towards the long blue and ſcarlet flowered creepers, which hung dropping over the cliffs.

He had ſo diſpoſed theſe different plants, that they were ſeen at one view; thoſe of low growth at the bottom of the hill, next to them ſhrubs and ſmall trees, and the talleſt ſorts at the top, ſo that the whole incloſure, ſeen from its center, appeared an amphitheatre of verdure, of fruits and flowers, comprehending garden plants, ſlips of meadow, and little fields of rice and wheat. But in the plan which he followed, he did not deviate from the indications of nature; he attended to the ſituation which ſuited the different plants, placing thoſe with winged ſeeds upon the high ground, and thoſe with

with floating ſeeds by the water-ſide; ſo that each ſpot nouriſhed its genuine offspring, and was embelliſhed by its own peculiar ornaments. The waters, which riſe in the mountain, formed ſprings and little lakes in the valley; which, intermixed with the verdure of the trees, reflected rocks and flowering ſhrubs, and the clear azure of the ſky.

Notwithſtanding the irregularity of the ground, theſe plantations were almoſt all of them eaſy of acceſs; it is true, that in order to effect this, we had all aſſiſted, not only by our advice but by our labour. There was one principal path which led compleatly round the valley, and from that ſeveral others branched out towards the center. In the more rocky parts, the walks were made to harmoniſe with the roughneſs of the ſoil,

and

and the wild plants with the cultivated. Of thoſe vaſt maſſes of ſtone which now block up the ways, they made, in different parts of the ground, pyramidal heaps, filling up the chinks with earth, and roots of roſe-trees, * poincillades, and other ſhrubs which love a rocky ſoil; and they were in a ſhort time covered with verdure, and enlivened with gay flowers. A deep water channel, overgrown with old trees, formed a vaulted receſs, impenetrable to the heat, which they often reſorted to in the middle of the day. One of the winding paths led to a little wood of foreſt-trees, in the center of which, and ſheltered from the wind, was a banana that was loaded with fruit. On one ſide was an orchard, on another a field. One glade

* Poinciana pulcherrima Linn.

glade opened to the cottages; another to the inacceſſible cliffs. From a copſe, thick tufted with * tatamacks, and interwoven with trailing plants, every outward object was excluded; and from the point of rock directly above it, which projects from the mountain, not only all the objects of the valley were open to the view, but the diſtant ſea, and ſometimes European veſſels were ſeen ſailing to or from the Indies. Upon this rock the families generally aſſembled in the evening, and enjoyed in ſilence the coolneſs of the breeze, the perfume of the flowers, the ſound of the water-falls, and the harmony of light and ſhade in the colours of departing day.

Theſe delightful little retreats received an additional charm from the

* Calophyllum Inophyllum Linn.

the names which had been given to many of them; the rock which I have been deſcribing to you, was called, * *La Decouverte de l'Amitié.* Paul and Mary had, in their plays, fixed a cane of bamboo there, upon which they uſed to diſplay a white handkerchief to notify my arrival, the moment they perceived me coming—as flags are hoiſted upon the mountain, when a veſſel is ſeen in the offing. I engraved a motto upon the ſtem. Whatever pleaſure I may have had in my travels, from ſeeing ſtatues and other remains of antiquity, I have received more from a good inſcription. The humane voice then ſeems to ſpeak to me from the marble, and, at the diſtance of ages, and in the midſt of deſerts, to tell me, that other men

* The Diſcovery of Friendſhip.

men here, in the ſame ſpot, had the ſame ſenſations, the ſame ideas, the ſame misfortunes, as myſelf. If it be the inſcription of ſome ancient nation, which now no longer exiſts, our minds are loſt in the regions of eternity; and, finding that a thought has outlived an empire, the ſenſe of our own immortality ſtrikes forcibly upon the ſoul.

I wrote upon the maſt of their little flag, theſe verſes of Horace:

——Fratres Helenæ, lucida ſidera,
Ventorumque regat pater,
Obſtrictis aliis, præter Iapyga*!

Upon the trunk of a tatamack,

* So may the Cyprian Queen divine,
And the Twin-ſtars with ſaving luſtre ſhine!
So may the Father of the wind,
All but the weſtern gales propitious bind!
FRANCIS.

under

under which Paul uſed to ſit ſometimes to look at the toſſing of the waves, I engraved this line of Virgil:

" Fortunatus et ille deos qui novit agreſtes *!"

And over the door of Madame de la Tour's cottage, which was the uſual place of meeting—

" At ſecura quies, et neſcia fallere vita †."

But Mary did not much approve my Latin; ſhe ſaid, that what I

* And happy too, tho' humbler, is the man
Who loves the rural Gods, the Nymps, and Pan. J. WHARTON.

† Yet calm content, ſecure from guilty cares,
Yet home-felt pleaſure, peace, and reſt are theirs. J. WHARTON.

had

had written under the vane was too long and too learned, and that ſhe ſhould like the ſhort motto;

Toujours agitée, mais conſtante *,

much better. I told her, that ſuch a motto would more properly be applied to virtue.—The obſervation made her colour.

Every thing round theſe happy dwellings bore ſome mark of the amiable character of the inhabitants. They had given many fond names to places which were in themſelves unintereſting. A circle of orange-trees and bananas, planted round a ſmall ſpot of level turf, where the children uſed ſometimes to dance, they called *La Concorde*. An old tree, under whoſe ſhade Madame de la Tour and

* Always moving, yet conſtant.

and Margaret had related their misfortunes to each other, they called, *Les pleurs eſſuiées* *. To two ſmall portions of land, where there were ſome peaſe, and ſtrawberries, and a little wheat, they gave the names of Brittany and Normandy.—Domingo and Frances too, had a pleaſure in calling to mind the places of their birth in Africa; and, in imitation of their miſtreſſes, they named two ſpots, *Angola*, and *Foulepoint*, where they gathered graſs to make their baſkets, and had planted a calabaſh-tree. And thus, by productions peculiar to their climate, they had contrived theſe little illuſions of their country, which ſoftened their regrets. I remember, alas! the time, when a thouſand endearing appellations gave

E animation

* Tears wiped away.

animation and intereſt to the trees, and fountains, and rocks of this now deſert ſpot, which, like a field of ancient Greece, preſents only ruins, and retains nothing but its name.

No part of the incloſure was more agreeable than the *Repos de Marie.* Under the rock, which was called *La Decouverte de l'Amitite*, there is a large excavation, in which a ſpring riſes, that immediately forms a baſon of water, ſurrounded by banks of fine turf. When Paul was born, I gave Margaret an Indian coco-nut, which had been ſent to me as a preſent. She planted it upon the edge of the baſon, that the tree which ſhould ſpring from it might one day ſerve to mark the æra of his birth. Madame de la Tour followed her example; and, with a like intention, planted a ſecond

in

in the ſame ſpot, when ſhe was brought to bed of Mary.

From theſe nuts, two coco-trees were produced, which conſtituted all the archives of both families. One of them was called Paul's tree, the other Mary's. Their growth was in the ſame proportion as the children's; one was a little taller than the other; but at the end of twelve years, they were both of them higher than the cottages. Their branches began to meet, and the ſtrings of their young nuts to hang over the baſon of the ſpring. Excepting the two trees, this receſs had received no ornament but from nature: broad capillaries ſpread their bright green over the dark and humid ſides of the rock, and tufts of long ſpleenwort hung from the top of it, and floated in the wind; below were beds of periwinckle, whoſe flowers

are like the red-ſtock; and capſicums, with vermilion pods, more brilliant than coral; and all around, the balms and ſweet-ſcented baſils perfumed the air. Numberleſs ſea-birds, attracted by theſe peaceful abodes, came there to reſt at night. At the ſetting of the ſun, the ſea-lark and gannet were ſeen ſkimming along the ſhore; and the white-tropick, and man-of-war-bird, flying high in the air, and with the ſun, quitting the ſolitudes of the Indian ſea. The ſcene was wild, but ſublime; and the banks of this little fountain was the moſt frequent reſort of Mary. She often waſhed the linen under the ſhade of the coco-trees, and brought her goats there to feed. Whilſt ſhe was preparing cheeſe from their milk, ſhe had a pleaſure in ſeeing them browſe the maiden-hair upon the ſteep ſides of the rock, and

poiſe

poiſe themſelves upon one foot as upon a pedeſtal. Paul, finding that it was her favourite ſpot, brought neſts of various kinds of birds from the wood, and placed them there; the parent birds followed their young, and ſettled in the new colony. Mary often fed them with ſeeds of maize, and rice, and millet; and, as ſoon as ſhe appeared, the whiſtling * ouſel, the Bengal birds, whoſe note is ſo ſoft, and the cardinals, with brilliant plumes, quitted the buſhes; parrots, green as emeralds, came down from the † viburnums; the partridge ran to her through the graſs, and all crouded about her like domeſtic poultry, and delighted her and her brother with their plays and their loves.

So

* Turdus canorus Linn.
† Lantana camara Linn.

So paſſed the early days of theſe ſweet children, in innocence and acts of benevolence. Often, in this ſpot, their mothers have preſſed them to their boſoms, and given thanks to Heaven for the comfort that was prepared for them in their old age! Often, under the ſhade of theſe rocks, we have made a rural repaſt together, for which the life of no animal had been ſacrificed! Calabaſhes full of milk, freſh eggs, cakes of rice upon banana-leaves, baſkets of batates, mangos, oranges, granadillas, bananas, annonas, and pine-apples, furniſhed the moſt ſalutary nouriſhment, the moſt delicious juices, and preſented the gayeſt colours.

The converſation was as mild and innocent as the repaſt. Paul often talked of the labours of the day, or of the morrow, and always meditated

meditated ſomething for the advantage of the ſociety. He obſerved, that a path was inconvenient, or perhaps that ſome ſeat had not ſhade enough from the young trees, and that Mary might have a better in another place.

In the rainy ſeaſon they paſſed the whole day together in the houſe, they and their ſervants all employed in making mats of graſs, and baſkets of bamboo. Ranged againſt the wall, in the moſt perfect order, were their rakes, and hatchets, and ſpades, and other implements of huſbandry; the ſheaves of corn, the ſacks of rice, and ſtrings of bananas, ſtood in rows, under the inſtruments of agriculture, which had been uſed for their production. They had not only abundance, they had even luxuries. Mary, inſtructed by her mother and Margaret, prepared ſherbets

ſherbets and cordials with the juice of the ſugar-cane, lemons, and cedratas.

When night came, they ſupped by the light of a lamp; and after ſupper, Madame de la Tour or Margaret related ſtories to the children, of travellers in Europe, loſt at night in roads infeſted by bands of robbers; or of ſhips wrecked by ſtorms, and caſt upon ſome deſert ſhore. During theſe relations, their warm hearts took fire, and they prayed to Heaven that they might ſome day have it in their power to exerciſe hoſpitality, and to give aſſiſtance to ſuch ſufferers. The families only ſeparated to take their reſt, and parted at night, impatient to meet again in the morning. Sometimes they were lulled to ſleep by the rain, which fell in torrents upon the thatch of their houſes, or by the

the winds, which wafted to them the ſound of the waves beating againſt the ſhore; and they bleſſed Providence for that ſecurity, which they doubly felt, from the ſenſe of diſtant danger.

Sometimes Madame de la Tour read aloud ſome affecting ſtory, from the Old or New Teſtament; they reaſoned but little upon theſe ſacred books; for their theology was all ſentiment, like that of nature, and their morality active, like that of the goſpel. Their days had no particular deſtination; ſome devoted to pleaſure, and others to ſorrow: all were alike holidays to them, and every place a temple, in which they adored a Being all-powerful, omniſcient, and author of all good to men. Their faith and confidence in him, conſoled them for their paſt misfortunes, gave them preſent ſupport, and made them look forward

with hope to the future. Brought back therefore to nature by their misfortunes, they had unfolded in themſelves and in their children, thoſe ſentiments which nature gives us, to prevent our falling into evil.

But clouds will ſometimes ariſe and ſadden the beſt-regulated minds; and when any one of the ſociety appeared melancholy, it engaged the attention of the reſt, and they all joined in endeavouring to remove theſe painful thoughts by affection rather than by reaſoning. The character of each individual was particularly marked in their manner upon ſuch occaſions: Margaret ſhewed her natural warmth and vivacity; Madame de la Tour, her mild religion; Paul, his firm and generous heart; Mary only employed ſoft careſſes. Even Frances and Domingo

mingo joined; they grieved with thoſe that grieved, and cried if they ſaw any one in tears. So weak plants cling together to reſiſt the tempeſt.

In fine weather they went every Sunday to maſs at the church of Pamplemouſſe, whoſe ſteeple you ſee in the plain below. Some of the rich inhabitants came in their palanquins to the ſame church, and had often wiſhed to make acquaintance with theſe two friendly families, and to engage them in parties of pleaſure. But they with great civility always refuſed ſuch invitations; well convinced, that when thoſe who are in proſperity and affluence, ſeek the ſociety of perſons in their circumſtances, it is from the deſire of having humble companians; and that ſuch companions are expected to flatter whatever vices or follies they may have.

have. On the other hand, they ſtudiouſly avoided making any intimacies with the inferior ſettlers, who are generally coarſe in their manners and full of envy and ſcandal. At firſt they were looked upon by the one as timid, and by the other as proud; but ſo much engaging civility accompanied the reſerve of their behaviour, particularly to the neceſſitous, that they by degrees acquired the eſteem of the rich, and the confidence of the poor.

After maſs was over they were frequently applied to, to do ſome good office: ſometimes it was a perſon in difficulty who wanted to be adviſed; or a young woman, perhaps, came to deſire that they would call in their way home to ſee her ſick mother. They generally carried with them the uſual and approved remedies, for ſuch diſorders

diſorders as the inhabitants are moſt liable to; and they had that happy manner of conferring a favour, which gives ſo much value to even a trifling ſervice. They were particularly calculated to relieve the diſtreſſes of the mind, which are ſo inſupportable in ſolitude and ſickneſs. Madame de la Tour talked to them with ſo much confidence in the mercies of God, that he became preſent to their hearts, and they were comforted. Mary often returned from ſuch ſcenes with her eyes bathed in tears; but her heart full of ſatisfaction, that ſhe had had an opportunity of doing good. It was her care previouſly to prepare the neceſſary remedies; ſhe alſo preſented them, and with an unſpeakable grace in her manner. After theſe charitable viſits, they ſometimes prolonged their walk, thro' the

the valley of the Long Mountain, as far as my houſe, and dined with me upon the banks of the little river that runs near me. For ſuch occaſions I had procured ſome bottles of old wine, in order to increaſe the gaiety of our Indian meal, by the mild and invigorating productions of Europe. Sometimes we appointed a meeting upon the ſea-ſhore, at the mouth of one of the little rivers, which are indeed only to be called large brooks. We uſed to bring vegetable productions from home, and to them were added ſuch as the ſea amply provided us with. Near the ſhore we caught * Cabots, Zoophytes, † Red Gurnards, ‡ Spring Lobſters, ‖ White

* Sparus Spinus L.
† Trigla cuculus L.
‡ Cancer Homarus L.
‖ Cancer Squilla L.

Shrimps,

Shrimps, Crabs, * Sea Urchins, Oyſters, and Shell Fiſh of all ſorts. Situations in themſelves full of terror, often afforded us the moſt calm pleaſures. Seated upon a rock, under the ſhade of a † Velvet-tree, we watched the ſucceſſive courſe of the waves, and ſaw them daſh with violence upon the ſhore beneath. Paul, who ſwam like a fiſh, ſometimes advanced into the tide to meet them, and at their approach, turning back towards the coaſt, the foaming torrent purſued him far upon the ſands. When Mary ſaw him in theſe ſituations, ſhe uſed to cry out, and ſay that ſuch amuſements always filled her with terror.

After our dinner, the young people generally amuſed themſelves with a little dancing and muſic.

* Echinus marinus L.
† Tourneſortia Argentea L.

Mary

Mary ſung the happineſs of a country life, and the dangers and diſtreſſes at ſea; deploring the miſtaken choice of thoſe who truſt the boiſterous elements in ſearch of riches, rather than cultivate the pleaſant earth, and enjoy all its various bleſſings in calmneſs and in peace. Sometimes, in imitation of the negroes, they performed a pantomime together: it is the firſt language of man, and is found amongſt all nations, and, being natural and full of expreſſion, the white children ſoon learn it, when they have ſeen it executed by the Blacks. Mary had collected, in the courſe of Madame de la Tour's reading, many intereſting ſtories, and ſhe repreſented the principal events of ſuch as had moſt pleaſed her, with a great deal of ſimplicity and nature. Sometimes, to the ſound of Domingo's tom-

tom-tom, ſhe came forward upon the turf, with a pitcher upon her head, and advanced with timidity towards the ſpring to draw water. Domingo and Mary, perſonated the Shepherds of Media, forbad her to approach, and pretended to turn her back. Paul running to her aſſiſtance, beat back the ſhepherds, filled her pitcher with water, and putting it upon her head, crowned her at the ſame time with a garland of red perewinckles, which gave freſh luſtre to her fine complexion.—I myſelf, entering into their little drama, took the part of Raguel, and granted to Paul my daughter Sarah in marriage.—Once ſhe repreſented the unfortunate Ruth, who returns poor and a widow, after a long abſence, and finds herſelf a ſtranger in her own country. Domingo and Mary were the reapers;

reapers; Mary pretended to glean a few ears of corn, and Paul, uſurping a Patriarchal dignity, aſked her queſtions, which ſhe anſwered trembling; but ſoon, touched with pity for her, he opened an aſylum to innocence, and granted hoſpitality to misfortune; he filled her apron with corn, and brought her before us, as before the elders of the city, declaring that he would take her to wife notwithſtanding her indigence. This ſcene recalled to the mind of Madame de la Tour, the manner in which ſhe had been herſelf abandoned by her relations—her widowhood—Margaret's kind reception of her—and now, the hope of ſeeing a happy marriage take place between their children, and ſhe ſhed tears; and the reflection upon this mixture of good and evil brought tears of

pleaſure

pleaſure and pain into all our eyes.

There was a truth and nature in theſe little repreſentations, which tranſported the imagination to the fields of Syria or Paleſtine. And we were not without the decorations, and illuminations, and orcheſtras that are uſed on ſuch occaſions. The performance was generally in a croſs-way in the foreſt, where two or three roads meet; and the glades through it formed over our heads arches of green foliage. In the center we were defended from the heat, whilſt the ſun was high; but when he ſunk to the horizon, his lengthened beams, broken by the bodies of the trees, ſtreamed far through the foreſt, producing beautiful effects of clear obſcure. Sometimes his whole diſk appeared at the end of an opening in the wood, and gave a reſplendent light. The

under

under branches, illuminated by his ſaffron rays, ſhone with all the vivid colours of the topaz and the emerald. Their brown and moſſy trunks, ſeemed like columns of antique bronze; and the birds, already ſheltered in ſilence under the thick ſhade of the leaves to paſs the night, ſurpriſed to view the return of the morning, ſaluted the departing rays in full chorus.

Thus engaged, the night often overtook us; but, from the purity of the air, and the mild temperature of the climate, we could ſleep with perfect ſecurity under a temporary ſhed in the midſt of the woods; and we had nothing to apprehend from robbers. In the morning, each returned to his reſpective home, and found every thing ſafe, juſt as it had been left; for there was at that time, before there was any commerce in the iſland, ſo much

much honeſty, and ſuch ſimplicity of manners, that the houſes had frequently no faſtening, and that a lock was an object of curioſity to many of the Creoles.

There were ſome days which Paul and Mary conſidered as times of particular feſtivity—the birth-days of their mothers; and theſe they celebrated as their greateſt holi-days. On the eve of theſe days, Mary never failed to make ſome cakes of wheaten flour, which ſhe ſent to the poor white inhabitants of the iſland, who ſeldom eat any European bread; and who unaſ-ſiſted by negroes, and reduced to live upon manioc in the midſt of deſerts, had neither the ſtupid in-ſenſibility which accompanies ſla-very, or the force of mind pro-duced by education, to enable them to endure their hardſhips. Theſe cakes were the only preſents which could

could be ſpared from the proviſion of the houſe; but the kindneſs with which they were given, added to their value. It was Paul, in the firſt place, who was employed to carry them to the different families, and they were invited to paſs the morrow at Madame de la Tour's, or at Margaret's: and next day the wretched people arrived; ſometimes, perhaps, a mother, with two or three pale and meagre daughters, ſo timid that they dared not look up; but Mary ſoon took off their conſtraint. She brought them refreſhments, which had each ſome particular circumſtance to recommend it—one was made by Margaret; another by her mother; or her brother had gathered the fruit himſelf at the top of a tree. She made Paul dance with them; and never reſted till ſhe ſaw them pleaſed and at

their caſe. She wiſhed them to partake of the joy of the family. "Making others happy," ſhe uſed to ſay, "is the only way to be happy one's ſelf. When they went away, ſhe prevailed upon them to take with them ſuch things as they had ſeemed to like; always finding a pretence in ſome novelty or particularity that diſtinguiſhed each, and never ſhewing a ſenſe of their poverty. Sometimes, when ſhe perceived that they were in great diſtreſs for cloaths, ſhe, with the conſent of her mother, choſe out ſome of her own for them, and ſent Paul to lay them privately at their doors: doing good in a manner that may truly be called divine—conferring the benefit, and concealing the benefactor.

As to you Europeans, who have your minds filled, from your earlieſt infancy, with ſo many prejudices

judices that impede preſent enjoyment, you cannot poſſibly conceive, that ſimple nature can give ſo much intelligence, and ſo much happineſs. Your minds, confined within the ſmall ſphere of human ſcience, very ſoon attain the term of artificial pleaſure; but nature and the human heart are inexhauſtible. Paul and Mary had neither clocks, nor almanacks, nor books of chronology. The periods of their life were regulated by thoſe of nature. They knew the hour of the day, by the length of ſhadow; the ſeaſons, by the blowing of flowers, or ripening of fruits; and the years, by the number of their harveſts. Theſe ſoft images gave a charm to their language. "It is time to dine," Mary would ſay, "for the ſhadow of the bananas falls ſtrait at their feet;" or, "evening is coming

ing on, the tamarind leaves are cloſed." If the daughters of a planter aſked her when ſhe would come to ſee them? "In the ſeaſon of the ſugar-canes," ſhe anſwered. "The pleaſure of your company will be ſtill ſweeter than they are," replied the young woman. If ſhe was aſked her age, or her brother's, ſhe ſaid, "Paul is as old as the great coco-tree by the fountain, and I am the age of the little one. The mangos have borne fruit twelve times, and the oranges have flowered four-and-twenty times, ſince I was born." Their exiſtence ſeemed connected with the life of the trees, like that of the Fawns and Dryads. They knew no hiſtory, but their mothers; they had no chronology, but that of their plantations; and all their philoſophy

conſiſted in reſignation to the will of God, and in doing good.

And, after all, where was the neceſſity for theſe young people to be rich and learned according to our ideas? Their wants and their ignorance contributed to their felicity. No day paſſed that they did not give ſome aſſiſtance to each other, or communicate ſome new light.—I may call it light; for, if there was a mixture of error, in a ſtate of pure nature man has no dangerous errors to apprehend: and in that ſtate the two children grew to maturity. No care had wrinkled their brow; no intemperance had heated their blood; and no wretched paſſions had depraved their hearts: but love, innocence, and piety, unfolded every day ſome freſh beauty of their minds, which beamed with grace ineffable in their countenance, and

appeared

appeared in every attitude and motion. In the morning of their lives, they poſſeſſed all the freſhneſs of the dawn ; like our parents in the garden of Eaden, when firſt placed there by the Creator, they beheld and approached each other as brother and ſiſter. Mary, mild, modeſt, and full of confidence as Eve ; and Paul, like Adam, of a manly form ; but with the innocence and ſimplicity of a child.

Sometimes, when they were alone (as he has ſince often told me) he uſed to ſay to her, after he was returned from his work, " Your preſence gives me reſt when I am weary. When from the mountain I ſee you below in this valley, you appear as an opening roſe amongſt the Plantations. When you are returning back to our habitation, the partridge running to its young has not a ſtep more graceful. If

I loſe you amongſt the trees, I can follow you without the help of ſight. For me, there remains ſome trace of you, which cannot be deſcribed, in the very air through which you have paſſed, and on the graſs where you have ſtepped. When I approach you, all my ſenſes are raviſhed. The azure of heaven is not ſo beautiful as your eyes—the note of the Bengal-birds is leſs ſweet than your voice. When I touch you, pleaſure thrills through all my veins. You remember the day when we croſſed the rocks of the Three-breaſted River. When we firſt came to its banks, I was ſpent with fatigue; but when I had taken you upon my ſhoulders, I ſeemed to have wings like a bird. Tell me, by what charm you have enchanted me! It is not by your underſtanding; our mothers have

more

more than either of us: or by your fondneſs for me; I am more careſſed by them than by you. It is then by your tenderneſs of heart; and I ſhall for ever remember your walking with naked feet to the Black River, to intercede for a fugitive ſlave. Take this branch of citron, it is full of flowers; I gathered it for you in the foreſt; you will put it by your couch at night. Taſte the honeycomb, which I have brought for you from the rocks. But firſt reſt your head upon my boſom, and I ſhall be refreſhed."

She anſwered, "Oh! my dear brother, the rays of the morning ſun upon the mountains, inſpire not ſo much pleaſure as your preſence. Much I love my own mother, and much I love your's; but when they call you their ſon, I love them ſtill more. I am more

more touched with their fondneſs for you, than with any kindneſs they ſhew to me. You aſk, what makes you love me? All creatures, that have been brought up together, love one another as we do; the birds which have been hatched in the ſame neſt, are always together as we are; you hear them call and anſwer each other from the different trees, as I anſwer you, when the echo brings to me the notes of your flute upon the hill, and I repeat the ſong here in the valley. You have been ſtill dearer to me ſince the day that you would, for my ſake, have fought with the maſter of the poor ſlave. Often ſince I have ſaid to myſelf, my brother has a kind and generous heart: unſupported by him, I ſhould have died with fear. I pray daily for your mother and for mine; for

you;

you; for our poor ſervants: but, when I pronounce your name, my devotion is increaſed. Oh! how fervently I beſeech the Almighty to protect you from all misfortune! Why do you go ſo far from home, and mount ſuch high trees, to procure fruit and flowers for me? have we not enough in our own garden? And now, how you have fatigued yourſelf! You are overcome with the heat." Then, with her little white handkerchief, ſhe wiped his forehead and his cheeks, and kiſſed him.

She had, however, for ſome time began to feel an agitation unknown to her before. She ſeemed oppreſſed with languor; her complexion tarniſhed; the ſerenity of her countenance was troubled, and ſmiles were no longer upon her lips. Sometimes ſhe was ſuddenly gay without cauſe, and grave without

out any thing to afflict her. She forſook her innocent amuſements, her pleaſing employments, and even the ſociety of her beloved family; and wandered in the moſt ſolitary parts of the ground, ſeeking reſt and finding none. Sometimes, when ſhe ſaw Paul, ſhe ran to meet him with her uſual gaiety; and then, ſuddenly ſeized with a ſenſation of diſtreſs and embarraſſment, her face overſpread with bluſhes, and ſhe ſcarcely dared to raiſe her eyes to his. "The rocks are covered with verdure," ſaid Paul, "the birds ſing when they ſée you—every thing around you is chearful, and you alone are ſad:" —and he endeavoured to chear her with careſſes, but ſhe turned aſide her head, and ran away to her mother. Paul did not underſtand caprices which appeared to him ſo new

new and unaccountable. An evil ſeldom comes unaccompanied.

One of thoſe ſummers, which from time to time deſolate the countries between the tropics, extended its ravages to this iſland. It was about the beginning of December, when the ſun in Capricorn darts his vertical beams upon the Iſle of France for three ſucceſſive weeks. The ſouth-eaſt wind, which blows almoſt all the year, was ſunk to a dead calm. Long whirlwinds of duſt, raiſed upon the roads, remained floating in the air. The earth ſplit, and divided every where into deep chaſms. The graſs was burnt up; hot vapours iſſued from the ſides of the mountains, and moſt of the ſprings were dry. No cloud came from the ſea; but, during the day, red exhalations aroſe in the plains, and appeared, towards the ſetting of

the ſun, like the flames of a conflagration. Even night brought no refreſhment to the burning atmoſphere. The orb of the moon, riſing in the thick and humid horizon, appeared of enormous ſize. The flocks, ſtretched upon the mountain ſides, and extending their necks towards heaven to breathe the air, made the vallies reſound with hollow bleatings. Even the Cafrarian ſhepherd lay by them, with his face turned to the earth, to find ſome mitigation of the heat. The ſoil was every where parched; and the ſuffocating air was full of the hum of inſects, ſeeking to aſſuage their thirſt with the blood of men and of animals.

In one of theſe ardent nights, Mary, unable to ſleep, and agitated by the diſtreſs of her mind, aroſe, and

and, by the light of the moon, walked towards her fountain. She found the ſpring, notwithſtanding the great drought, running in ſmall ſilver ſtreams over the dark rock. She bathed herſelf in the little lake; and, refreſhed by the coolneſs of the water, a thouſand pleaſant images recurred to her memory. She recollected how often her mother and Margaret had bathed her in the ſame place with Paul; and that Paul had afterwards deepened the bed, lined it with ſand, planted the banks with odoriferous herbs, and made it ſacred to her. She ſaw in the water, and upon her naked arms and boſom, the reflection of the two palms planted at her birth and at her brother's, whoſe branches now met and were interwoven over her head. She thought of Paul's friendſhip, more pure than the

waters;

waters of the fountain, ſtronger than the united palms, and ſweeter than the perfume of flowers: and theſe images, in night, and in ſolitude, gave double force to the paſſion which ſhe nouriſhed in her heart. She ſuddenly left the dangerous ſhades, and went to her mother, to ſeek protection againſt herſelf. She wiſhed to reveal her diſtreſs to her; ſhe preſſed her hands, and the name of Paul was on her lips; but the oppreſſion of her heart took away all utterance, and, laying her head upon her mother's boſom, ſhe only wept.

Madame de la Tour had perceived the infant paſſion of her daughter, and knew the cauſe of her emotion; but ſhe would not venture to ſpeak of it. She only ſaid, "Addreſs yourſelf, my dear child, to Heaven; the ſovereign diſpoſer of health and life. If you are one day tried by affliction,

affliction, you will be recompenſed on the morrow. And remember, that it was to exerciſe our virtues, that we were placed in this world."

At length theſe exceſſive heats exhaled a moiſture from the ſea, which ſpread over the iſland like a vaſt canopy. It was collected by the tops of the mountains, and long ſtreams of fire iſſued, from time to time, from their covered points. Soon after, tremendous thunder echoed through the woods and valleys; the rain fell from heaven like cataracts; and foaming torrents poured down the mountains ſides. The bottom of this valley become a ſea; the knoll on which the cottages are ſituated, an iſland in the midſt of it; and the chaſm which makes the entrance into it, a ſluice, through which the waters ruſhed with impetuoſity, ſweeping before them,

earth,

earth, and rocks, and trees torn up by the roots.

The family, all trembling with fear, were aſſembled together, and praying in Madame de la Tour's houſe, the roof of which groaned with the wind. And though the ſhutters and doors were cloſed, they ſaw every thing diſtinctly by the lightning, which ſhone through the crevices of the boards, its flaſhes were ſo vivid and ſucceeded each other ſo rapidly. The intrepid Paul, followed by Domingo, went from one cottage to the other, notwithſtanding the fury of the tempeſt, to ſecure the buildings, driving ſtakes in ſome places, and putting buttreſſes in others; and only returning into the houſe to comfort the family and to give them hopes that the ſtorm was nearly over. In effect, towards evening the rain ceaſed, and the general

general trade-wind from the ſouth-eaſt began to take its uſual courſe. The heavy clouds were driven towards the north-weſt, and the ſetting ſun broke out in the horizon.

Mary's firſt wiſh was to ſee her favourite fountain. Paul approached her with a timid air, and offered to accompany her. She, ſmiling, took hold of his arm, and they went out of the houſe together. The air was freſh and ſonorous. The mountains ſteamed with a white vapour, and their ſides were furrowed with the torrents, and covered with the foam of the waters, which were now ceaſing to flow. The garden was entirely deſtroyed by deep channels, and the roots of the fruit-trees laid bare. Heaps of ſand covered the ſlips of meadow, and Mary's bath was quite filled up.

up. The two coco's were, however, ſtanding, and unhurt. But there was nothing to be ſeen around them, neither turf, nor ſhade, nor birds, excepting ſome Bengals, which were perched upon the neighbouring rocks, and deplored in plaintive notes the loſs of their little ones.

Seeing this deſolation, Mary ſaid to Paul, "You brought birds to this ſpot, and they are deſtroyed by the ſtorm. You planted this garden, and it is ſwept away. Every thing periſhes upon this earth; it is heaven only that can never be changed." He anſwered, "I wiſh I had heavenly gifts to beſtow upon you; but alas! I poſſeſs nothing even upon earth." Mary, colouring, replied, "Yes, you have a little picture of St. Paul." She had no ſooner pronounced the words, than he

ran

ran back to his mother's houſe to fetch it. This picture was a miniature of Paul the Hermit. Margaret had always regarded it with particular veneration. She had worn it for a long time about her neck when ſhe was a girl; and afterwards, when ſhe was become a mother, ſhe hung it about the neck of her infant. It had happened that when ſhe was with child of him, and deſerted by the whole world, ſhe had continually contemplated this image of the holy hermit, and her infant was in conſequence impreſſed with ſome reſemblance of him, which had induced her to give his name to her ſon, and to chooſe for his patron a ſaint, who had paſſed his life far remote from a world in which ſhe had been betrayed and abandoned. When Mary received it from the hands of Paul, ſhe ſaid, with emotion,

tion, " This picture, brother, ſhall never be taken from me whilſt I live, and I ſhall ever keep in mind, that you gave me your only poſſeſſion." The friendly accents, the unhoped-for return of intimacy and tenderneſs, enchanted Paul, and he would have taken her in his arms; but ſhe eſcaped from his embrace, and left him in conſternation at a conduct, which appeared to him ſo inexplicable.

Margaret uſed to ſay to Madame de la Tour, " Why ſhould not we marry our children? They have an extreme paſſion for each ether, though my ſon does not yet know it; we ſhall have much anxiety about them, and may have ſome real diſtreſs." Madame de la Tour anſwered, " They are too young and too poor. What ſhould we do if Mary brought forth unfortunate children, that ſhe was not

not able to nurſe? Your Domingo is advanced in years; Frances is infirm; and for myſelf, my dear friend, I feel that I have loſt much of the ſtrength that I poſſeſſed fourteen years ago. A hot climate ſoon brings an old age, and ſorrow haſtens it ſtill more. All our hope is in Paul. Let us wait till he is come to maturity; till he is arrived at his full ſtrength, and is able to ſupport the family by his labour. You know that we at preſent have barely what is neceſſary for our daily ſubſiſtence. But if we were to ſend Paul to the Indies for a ſhort time, he might, by commerce, ſoon obtain a ſufficient fund for the purchaſe of a few ſlaves; and at his return, we would marry him to Mary; for I have no object in life but the happineſs of my dear child, and I am ſatisfied, I can no way ſo well ſecure

cure it as by marrying her to your ſon. We will talk to our neighbour about it." The ladies accordingly told me their deſign, and aſked my advice. I was of their opinion with regard to the expediency of it. "The voyage to India," I ſaid, "is ſafe. By taking a favourable ſeaſon, the paſſage may be made in about ſix weeks, and you may allow the ſame time nearly for the return. We will make up a little bale of goods for Paul in my diſtrict; for I have neighbours who have a great regard for him. If we only give him raw cotton, which we cannot work ourſelves, for want of proper mills to dreſs it; and ebony, which is in ſuch plenty that we uſe it for fuel; and reſins, that are waſted in our woods; they will ſell well in India, and are perfectly uſeleſs to us here." I undertook to

to procure from M. de la Bourdonaye the neceſſary permiſſion for him to embark, and previouſly to inform Paul of the plan. But my aſtoniſhment was very great, when, with a ſtrength of underſtanding much above his years, he ſaid, "Why ſhould I quit my family, for I know not what project of making a fortune? Is any commerce in the world more advantageous than the cultivation of land, which ſometimes yields fifty and a hundred fold? If, however, we muſt engage in commerce, why cannot we do it by carrying our ſuperfluities from hence to the town? Our mothers ſay that Domingo is old and infirm; but I am young, and my ſtrength daily increaſing. Suppoſe an accident ſhould happen to them whilſt I am abſent, particularly to Mary, who

is not now in health. Oh, no! I cannot reſolve to leave them."

This anſwer greatly embarraſſed me; for Madame de la Tour had not concealed from me the rapid progreſs that love had made in the heart of her daughter, and the deſire ſhe had to gain a little time; and, by ſeparating the young people, to prevent too early a marriage. Theſe were motives which, of courſe, I concealed from Paul.

Juſt at this juncture, a veſſel arrived from France, which brought to Madame de la Tour a letter from her aunt. The fear of death, which alone has power to make any impreſſion upon a mind that is naturally hard, had diſpoſed her to alter her conduct with regard to her niece. She had undergone a ſevere illneſs, which had left her in a low and languid ſtate, and her age made it unlikely that ſhe

ſhould

ſhould ever perfectly recover her health. She wrote to Madame de la Tour, to deſire that ſhe would return to France, or, if ſhe was not able to make ſo long a voyage herſelf, ſhe enjoined her to ſend Mary, to whom ſhe intended leaving the whole of her fortune; and in the mean time, ſhe ſaid ſhe would take care to have her properly educated, and to find a ſuitable mach for her. An immediate compliance with this demand, ſhe added, was the only means of recovering her favour and protection.

The reading of this letter ſpread conſternation through the family. Domingo and Mary began to cry. Paul, motionleſs with ſurpriſe, was upon the point of uttering ſome expreſſions of anger. Mary, with her eyes fixed upon her mother, dared not open her lips. "Could you

you *now* leave us?" ſaid Margaret. "No, my friend!" ſhe anſwered; "No, my children!" I will not leave you. I have lived with you, and I will die with you. I have known no happineſs but in your friendſhip. If my health is impaired, former ſorrows are the cauſe of it. The loſs of a beloved huſband, and the cruelty of my parents, were deep and incurable wounds. But I have ſince found more conſolation and peace with you, in theſe poor huts, than I could have hoped for from all the wealth of my family in Europe."

Tears of joy ran down all their cheeks whilſt ſhe ſpoke. Paul preſſed her in his arms, ſaying, "I will not leave you neither. I will not go to India. We will all work for you, my deareſt mother! you ſhall want nothing here with us." Of all preſent, the perſon

perſon who ſhewed the leaſt outward marks of pleaſure, and who felt the moſt in her heart, was Mary. The ſweeteſt gaiety appeared in her manner all the reſt of the day, and the return of her eaſe and cheerfulneſs compleated the general joy.

The next day, at ſun-riſe, when they had juſt finiſhed the morning prayer, which it was their cuſtom to make before breakfaſt, Domingo told them that a gentleman on horſeback, followed by two ſlaves, was coming to the houſe. It was Monſieur de la Bourdonaye. He entered the room where they were all at breakfaſt. Mary had ſet upon the table, according to the cuſtom of the country, coffee and boiled rice. There were alſo hot batates, and freſh bananas. The only veſſels were calabaſhes cut in half; and leaves of the ba-

nana-tree ſerved for linen. The Governor at firſt expreſſed ſome ſurpriſe at the meanneſs of the habitation. Then, addreſſing himſelf to Madame de la Tour, he ſaid, that, ingroſſed as he was by public buſineſs, private concerns were ſometimes neglected by him; but that ſhe was entitled to his particular attention. "You have an aunt," ſaid he, "Madame, at Paris, a woman of quality, and very rich, who intends to leave you her fortune, and who expects you to return to her." Madame de la Tour told the Governor, that her broken health would not allow her to think of undertaking ſo long a voyage. "Your daughter, however," replied M. de la Bourdonaye, "young and charming as ſhe is, ſhould not be deprived of a rich inheritance; it would be doing her an injuſtice. And

I will

I will own to you, that your aunt has applied to Government to obtain her. I have an official letter, by which I am directed to uſe the hand of power, if neceſſary; though, as I never exerciſe it but for the advantage of the inhabitants of this colony, I hope to gain your conſent to this ſacrifice, which is only for a few years, and upon which your daughter's fortune and eſtabliſhment entirely depend. What brings people to India, but the deſire of acquiring a fortune? and it is ſurely much more agreeable to return, and find a fortune in one's own country."

When he had ſaid this, he laid on the table a bag full of piaſtres, which one of his negroes had brought. "This ſum," he added, "is deſtined by your aunt to defray the neceſſary expences previous to your daughter's depar-

 ture."

ture." He finiſhed, by gently reproaching Madame de la Tour, for not having applied to him when ſhe had been in need of aſſiſtance; at the ſame time applauding her independent ſpirit. Paul inſtantly anſwered, " Sir, my mother did apply to you, and was very coldly received." " Have you another child, beſides your daughter Mary, Madam?" ſaid the Governor. " No, Sir," ſhe replied; " that young man is the ſon of my friend; but our children are in common, and equally dear to us both." The Governor then, turning to Paul, ſaid, " Young man, when you have more experience of the world, you will know the misfortune of thoſe in power; you will ſee with how much facility they may be prejudiced; and how often deſigning men gain by cabal, what ought

ought to be given to modeſt merit."

M. de la Bourdonaye, invited by Madame de la Tour, took his place by her at the table, and breakfaſted after the manner of the Creoles, upon coffee, mixed with rice, boiled in water. He was charmed with the neatneſs and order of the little dwelling, the union of the two families, and the attachment of their old ſervants. "The furniture is rough and poor," ſaid he; "but here are happy countenances, and hearts above all price." Paul began to be pleaſed with the familiarity of the Governor, and ſaid, "I ſhould wiſh for your friendſhip, for you ſeem to be a worthy man." This mark of ruſtic cordiality pleaſed M. de la Bourdonaye; he ſhook Paul by the hand, and aſſured him that

that he might depend upon his protection.

After breakfaſt, he took Madame de la Tour aſide, and told her, that there would be an opportunity of ſending her daughter to France, on board a veſſel which was expected to ſail in a ſhort time; and that he would recommend her to the care of a lady who intended to return in it, and to whom he was related: he adviſed her, upon all accounts, not to give up the proſpect of an immenſe fortune, for a few years of preſent enjoyment. "Your aunt," ſaid he, when he was going away, "cannot hold out above two years, I have it from her own intimate acquaintance. Conſider well of it. Fortune is not always in our power. Conſult your friends, you will find them all of my opinion." Madame de la Tour told him

him, that, as ſhe had no wiſh upon earth but to ſee her daughter happy, ſhe ſhould leave the determination entirely to her.

Madame de la Tour was not ſorry to have an opportunity of ſeparating Paul and Mary for a time, as they might by that means have a better proſpect of future happineſs. She had a long converſation with her daughter in private, in which ſhe repreſented to her the ſtate of the family. "Our ſervants," ſaid ſhe, "are grown old, my dear child; Paul is very young; Margaret is not what ſhe uſed to be; and I am already very infirm; If I ſhould die, what would become of you, without any means of ſubſiſtence in theſe deſerts? You would be left here without any one capable of giving you much aſſiſtance, and you would be obliged to work like a hireling for

for mere food. The idea ſinks my heart with ſorrow." "God condemned us to labour," anſwered Mary. "You taught me to ſubmit to the taſk, and to bleſs him every day. He has not hitherto forſaken us, and I truſt he will protect us ſtill. The wretched are his peculiar care. How often, my dear mother, you have told me ſo! I cannot reſolve to leave you." Madame de la Tour replied, with much emotion, "I have no view but to promote your happineſs, and to marry you at a future time to Paul, who is not your brother; conſider, therefore, that his fortune alſo depends upon you." Mary had ſuppoſed that her infant paſſion had been hid from every eye, as is uſual to perſons of her age; they ſeem to place before their eyes the veil which conceals their hearts; but when

when once it is withdrawn by a friendly hand, they pour out all their ſecret ſorrows; and the moſt overflowing confidence ſucceeds to reſerve and myſtery. Mary, touched with theſe new proofs of her mother's kindneſs, unfolded to her the inmoſt receſſes of her mind, and thoſe ſtruggles which had been only known to Heaven; thanking Providence for having ſent her the ſupport ſhe had received from a mother's tenderneſs, and approbation; and adding, that every thing now contributed to make her reſolve to remain with them, for there was no longer any reaſon to be anxious either for the preſent or for the future.

Madame de la Tour, finding that her converſation with her daughter had produced an effect directly contrary to what ſhe had expected, ſaid, "My dear child,

I will not inſiſt upon your going; take time to deliberate; but conceal your love from Paul. It is dangerous to confeſs to a lover that he is beloved."

Towards evening, when ſhe was alone with her daughter, a tall man entered in a blue caſſock. He was a miſſionary prieſt belonging to the iſland, and confeſſor to Madame de la Tour and Mary. He was ſent by the Governor. "Heaven be praiſed! my good friends," ſaid he, as he entered, "you are now rich. You may henceforth follow the dictates of your generous hearts, and relieve your poor neighbours. I know what paſſed in your converſation with M. de la Bourdonaye this morning. Your health, good lady, obliges you to remain here; but you, my child, have no excuſe, We muſt obey the will of

of Providence, and comply with the demands of our aged relations, even ſuppoſing them to be unjuſt. It may be a ſacrifice; but it is the order of God. He made a great ſacrifice for us, and we ſhould follow the example, and devote ourſelves to the good of our family. Your voyage to France will end proſperouſly. You will go, my dear child, you will not certainly refuſe?"

Mary, with her eyes fixed upon the ground, anſwered, with a trembling voice, "If it is indeed the order of Providence that I ſhould go, I will make no reſiſtance. Let the will of Heaven be done;" and ſhe burſt into tears.

The miſſionary left them, and went to give the Governor an account of his ſucceſs. And Madame de la Tour ſent Domingo to me, to tell me that ſhe wiſhed

to

to conſult me concerning the departure of her daughter. I was by no means of opinion that they ſhould ſend her to France; for I have always looked upon it as a firſt principle of happineſs, that ſimple and natural enjoyments ſhould be preferred to thoſe of fortune, and that we ſhould never ſeek at a diſtance, what is to be found within ourſelves. Theſe maxims I extend to every thing without exception. But what availed my principles of moderation, in oppoſition to the illuſions of fortune; or ſimple reaſon againſt the prejudices of the world, and an authority which Madame de la Tour held ſacred? I conſidered her application to me for my advice, therefore, only as an effect of her civility; for, after the deciſion of her confeſſor, ſhe had no doubts remaining. Even Margaret, who, not-

notwithſtanding the advantages which ſhe might expect to accrue to her ſon, had hitherto ſtrenuouſly oppoſed the departure of Mary, no longer made any objection. As to Paul, though he was ignorant of the determination, the private converſations of Madame de la Tour and her daughter alarmed him, and he fell into an extreme melancholy. "Some deſign is in agitation," he uſed to ſay, "and it muſt be againſt me, ſince it is concealed from me."

As ſoon as the report was ſpread that theſe rocks had been viſited by fortune, they were beſieged by dealers of all ſorts, who diſplayed the rich merchandize of India in theſe poor huts; fine dimities of Godelour; handkerchiefs of Pellicate and Maſſulipatan; muſlins of Dacca, plain, ſtriped, embroidered, and of the fineſt texture; beautiful

beautiful white baftas of Surat; chities of all colours, and of the rareſt ſorts, with dark grounds and green ſprigs. They unrolled pieces of magnificent ſilk from China; lampas of all open work; damaſks of ſilver white, of graſs green, and ſplendid roſe-colour; taffeties of pink, and ſattins without number; delicate chintzes; nankeens, white and yellow; and even the pagnes of Madagaſcar.

Madame de la Tour wiſhed her daughter to take whatever ſhe liked; and only attended herſelf to the quality and price of ſuch as ſhe choſe, that ſhe might not be impoſed upon. Mary ſelected ſuch things as ſhe thought would be moſt agreeable to her mother, to Margaret, and to Paul: —one piece would make good furniture, ſhe ſaid—another would be uſeful for Domingo and Frances; till

till at length the bag of piaſtres was exhauſted, and ſhe had thought of nothing for herſelf, ſo that her portion was afterwards collected from the various preſents ſhe had made to the family.

Theſe gifts of fortune filled the heart of Paul with all the bitterneſs of grief; he looked upon them as the preſages of Mary's departure. He came to me ſome days after, and with the moſt dejected countenance ſaid, "My ſiſter is going; preparations are already making for her voyage. Come, I entreat you, and uſe all your influence over her mother and mine, to prevail upon them to keep her here." I complied with his earneſt requeſt, though I was perfectly convinced, before hand, that my remonſtrances would be of no uſe.

I had always thought Mary beautiful in her coarſe blue cloth of

of Bengal, and with only a pink handkerchief about her head; but her charms appeared to much greater advantage, now that ſhe was dreſſed like the ladies of the country. She was in white muſlin lined with roſe-colour, which was made cloſe to her ſhape, and ſhewed all the delicacy of her form; and her golden hair, plaited in double treſſes, adorned her fair face. Her fine blue eyes were full of melancholy: and the ſtruggles of paſſion, which agitated her heart, gave to her complexion a vivid colour, and to her voice the moſt touching ſounds. Even the gay dreſs, which it ſeemed irkſome to her to wear, formed a contraſt, that made the dejection of her countenance the more ſtriking. It was impoſſible to ſee her, or hear her ſpeak, without emotion. Paul's grief increaſed daily. Margaret,

concerned

concerned at the ſituation in which ſhe ſaw him, ſaid, "My dear ſon, why do you encourage falſe hopes? When you are obliged to give them up, the ſtruggle will be greater and more afflicting to you. It is time that I ſhould tell you the ſecret of your life and mine. Mademoiſelle de la Tour is related, on the ſide of her mother, to a perſon of conſequence and of great fortune in France. Your mother is only the daughter of a farmer, and, what is more, you are illegitimate."

The word illegitimate ſurpriſed him. He had never heard it before; and, having aſked the meaning of it, ſhe anſwered; "You had no lawful father. When I was young, love made me guilty of a fault, of which you were the conſequence. My weakneſs deprived you of your paternal family,

mily, and my repentance of your mother's. Unfortunate child, you have no relation in the world but myſelf!" and ſhe ſhed tears. Paul put his arms about her neck, and anſwered, "Oh my dear mother! ſince I have no relation in the world but yourſelf, I ſhall love you the more. But what a ſecret you have revealed to me! I now ſee the reaſon, which has made Mary avoid my company for the laſt two months; and which determines her to leave us. Alas! ſhe certainly deſpiſes me!

When they met at ſupper, they all ſat down together as uſual; but, each agitated by different paſſions, they eat little, and did not ſpeak. Mary firſt left the table, and came to ſit upon the bank where we now are. Paul followed ſoon after, and placed himſelf by her. For ſome time they kept a pro-

a profound ſilence. It was one of thoſe delicious nights, ſo common between the tropics, the beauty of which it is not in the power of painting to imitate. The moon appeared in the midſt of the firmament ſurrounded with thin clouds, which her rays by degrees diſperſed, and gently extended their light over the mountains of the iſland, and the rocks of ſilver grey. The winds were huſhed; and in the woods and valleys were heard the ſoft notes of young birds, murmurring and careſſing each other in their neſts, animated by the clearneſs of the night and the ſtillneſs of the air. The inſects ruſtled in the graſs. The ſtars ſhone with double luſtre, and their trembling light was reflected in the boſom of the deep. Mary's diſtreſſed eyes wandered over the vaſt and dark horizon of the ſea,

ſhone

which was only diſtinguiſhed from the land by the red lights of the fiſhermen ; ſhe perceived at the entrance of the port, a ſtream of light and a length of ſhadow.—It was the lantern of the veſſel in which ſhe was to embark for Europe, and which lay at anchor ready to ſail as ſoon as the calm ſhould ceaſe. The ſight of the veſſel excited freſh ſorrow, and ſhe turned aſide her head that Paul might not ſee her tears.

Madame de la Tour, Margaret, and myſelf were ſeated at a little diſtance from them, under ſome banana-trees, and in the ſilence of the night we diſtinctly heard their converſation, which I have not forgot.

" I find, Madame, that you are going in a few days," ſaid Paul. " You will riſk the dangers of

of the ſea—the ſea, of which you have often expreſſed ſo much terror." "I muſt ſubmit to my relations, and to my duty," anſwered Mary. "You leave us," replied Paul, "for a relation whom you have never ſeen!" "Alas!" ſaid ſhe, "I ſhould have wiſhed to remain here for ever; but my mother would not conſent to it. My confeſſor alſo told me, that it was the will of God that I ſhould go; and that this life was a trial. Oh! it is a ſevere trial."

"Are there then," ſaid he, "ſo many reaſons that determine you to go, and are there none which can induce you to ſtay? Oh you have motives for your departure which you have not named! Riches have great allurements! The appellation of brother, which you no longer give to me, you will beſtow

beſtow upon another in a new world; and that happy brother will be ſelected from amongſt thoſe who are worthy of you, by birth, as well as by fortune, which I have not to offer to you. But where would you go to be happier? Upon what coaſt can you land, which can be dearer to you, than that where you were born? Where can you find a ſociety more agreeable than that in which you are ſo much beloved? How will you be able to forego the tender careſſes of your mother, which you have ever been accuſtomed to? What will become of her, already advanced in years, when ſhe no longer ſees you by her ſide, at table, in the houſe, in our walks, in which ſhe always leaned upon your arm? What will become of

mine,

mine, to whom you are equally dear? What ſhall I ſay to give them comfort, when I ſee them weep for your loſs? Cruel as you are, I ſpeak not of myſelf: but what will become of me, when I no longer ſee you with us in the morning, and that night comes and we aſſemble without you; when I ſee the two palm-trees, which were planted at our birth, and were ſo long witneſs of our mutual friendſhip? Oh! ſince another lot has more charms for you; ſince you will leave your native land for one that you have not known, and for ſuch advantages as my labour cannot procure for you; let me go with you in the veſſel which is to carry you to Europe; I will comfort you in the ſtorm; you ſhall reſt your head

head upon my boſom, and my heart ſhall cheriſh you: and, arrived in France, where you go to ſeek riches and honours, I will ſerve you as your ſlave. Happy only in our happineſs; in thoſe magnificent dwellings, where I ſhall ſee you adored and admired, I ſhall be ſtill rich enough, and great enough, to make you the greateſt of all ſacrifices, by dying at your feet." His voice faltered, and he ceaſed to ſpeak.

Mary replied, in broken accents, "It is for you that I go—for you, whom I have ſeen bent down with labour for the ſuport of our infirm parents. If I have accepted this opportunity to acquire riches, it is with the hope of making an ample return to you for all your goodneſs to us. But, no wealth is equal in value to your friendſhip. What do you talk

talk of birth? Oh!—if it were poſſible for me now to chooſe a brother, ſhould I take any other but you? O Paul! Paul! you are much more than a brother to me! What has it not coſt me to avoid you! I wiſhed you to aſſiſt me in ſeparating myſelf from you, till Heaven ſhould bleſs our union. But I will ſtay, or go, or live, or die as you determine—diſpoſe of me as you will. Weak as I am! I reſiſted your careſſes, but I cannot withſtand your grief!"

Paul caught her in his arms, and, preſſing her eagerly to his boſom, he cried, with a deep, determined voice, "I will go with her—nothing ſhall ſeparate us!" We all ran to him. Madame de la Tour ſaid, "If you leave us, what ſhall we do, my dear ſon?"

He repeated the words, Son!—Son!—with a tremulous voice.

" Does the mother ſeparate her children!" ſaid he: " both have been fed with your milk; both have been brought up upon your lap; we learnt of you to love each other, and now you would ſend her from me!—ſend her to Europe, that cruel country, where you were yourſelf refuſed an aſylum; and to hard relations, by whom you were yourſelf abandoned. You will tell me, that I have no claim to her; that ſhe is not my ſiſter. But ſhe is every thing to me; riches, family, rank, all my poſſeſſion; I know no other. We have had one cradle, and we will have but one grave. If ſhe goes, I muſt accompany her. Say that the Governor will prevent me!—he cannot prevent my throwing myſelf into the ſea, and I will ſwim after the veſſel. The waves cannot be more fatal

to

to me than this ſhore. And, as I cannot live with her here, I will at leaſt die in her ſight, and far from you, mercileſs as you are, and undeſerving the name of mother! May the ocean, to whoſe dangers you expoſe her, withhold her from you for ever! May the waves caſt back my body to the land, and, rolling it with her's upon the ſands, pierce your heart with grief for the loſs of both your children!"

I ſeized hold of him, as he pronounced theſe words, for his deſpair ſeemed to have diſordered his ſenſes. His eyes were inflamed with paſſion; the ſweat rolled off his heated cheeks; his knees ſhook; and his heart beat with violence againſt his agitated boſom.

Mary, trembling with apprehenſion for him, ſaid, "Oh! my

dear friend! I call to witneſs the charm of our infant-love, our mutual ſorrows, and all that can bind one unfortunate being to another, that if I ſtay, it will be to live with you; and if I go, that I will return to be your's for ever. I call upon you all to bear teſtimony of it—you, who have brought me up, who diſpoſe of my life, and who now ſee my tears. I ſolemnly vow it, by that Heaven which hears me; by the ſea which I am to traverſe; by the air which I breathe, and which I have never ſullied by falſehood."

As the rocks of ice fall from the Appenines with the heat of the ſun, ſo ſunk the impetuous fury of this young man, upon hearing the voice of his beloved. He held down his head and wept. His mother, mixing her tears with his, took him in her arms, but did

not ſpeak. Madame de la Tour, quite overcome, turned to me, and ſaid, " I can bear theſe ſcenes no longer! they rend my heart. This fatal voyage ſhall not take place. My good friend, try if you can prevail upon Paul to go home with you. We have none of us ſlept for the laſt ſix days."

" Paul," ſaid I, " your ſiſter will not go. To-morrow we ſhall apply to the Governor. But come home with me now, and let your family repoſe quietly. It is late; it is already midnight, for the ſouthern croſs is upon the horizon."

He made no anſwer, but followed me; and after a night of great agitation, he aroſe at day-break, and returned to his habitation.

But why ſhould I continue this narration? In the life of man there

is

is but one ſide that can be looked at with pleaſure; like the globe upon which we turn, a few hours complete the rapid revolution, and one half remains in darkneſs, that the other may enjoy the light.

Let me entreat you to continue, I anſwered, and finiſh a relation which you have begun in a manner ſo intereſting. The images of happineſs give us pleaſure, and thoſe of misfortune inſtruct. Tell me what became of the wretched Paul.

The firſt object he ſaw was their mulatto, Frances, who was upon a rock looking towards the open ſea. He called out, as ſoon as he came within hearing, "Where is Mary?" Frances turned her head away, and cried. Paul, almoſt frantic, ran inſtantly to the port. There he heard that Mary had embarked at day-break; that the

the veſſel had ſet ſail immediately, and was no longer in ſight. He returned to the houſe, and went through it without ſpeaking.

Although this encloſure of rock behind us appears almoſt perpendicular, there are little green platforms which divide it into different ſtages, by means of which it is poſſible, by ſome rough and broken paths, to climb up as far as the baſe of that inacceſſible cone, which is called the Needle. At the foot of this, there is a level ſpace full of large trees; but in a ſituation ſo elevated and ſo ſteep, it is almoſt to be called a foreſt in the air. The ſummit of the Needle, attracting the clouds, ſeveral little ſtreams are formed upon the height, which fall into the valley; but at ſo great a depth below it, that the daſhing of the water at the bottom is not heard

at

at the top. This ſpot commands the greateſt part of the iſland, with its mountains, and the high pikes riſing again above them ; amongſt the reſt, Pitterboth, and the Three-breaſted Mountain, with their wooded vallies ; and beyond them an extenſive view of the ocean, as far as the Iſle of Bourbon, which is forty leagues to the weſt. It was from this place that Paul deſcried the veſſel which carried Mary away. It was ten leagues from the ſhore, and appeared only as a dark ſpot in the midſt of the boundleſs ſea. He remained there the greateſt part of the day, with his eyes fixed upon it. When it was no longer viſible, he thought he ſtill perceived it; and when he found that it was entirely loſt in the miſt of the horizon, he yet continued upon the wild and bleak rocks, where the palms and bananas

bananas are continually blown about by the winds, and their deep and hollow ſounds, like the notes of a diſtant organ, inſpire profound melancholy. It was in this ſpot that I found him, leaning his head againſt a ſtone, and with his eyes fixed upon the ground. I had been in ſearch of him ever ſince the riſing of the ſun. With much difficulty I prevailed upon him to deſcend, and to return to his family; and at length brought him home. When he firſt ſaw Madame de la Tour, he reproached her bitterly for having deceived him. She told us, that the wind having riſen about three in the morning, and the veſſel being ready to ſail, the Governor, followed by a part of his guard, and attended by the miſſionary, had come with a palanquin to fetch her daughter;

and that all with one voice crying out, that it was for the advantage of the whole family, in ſpite of her remonſtrances and tears they had carried Mary away, almoſt ſenſeleſs.

" If I had but taken leave of her," cried Paul, " I might even now feel ſome degree of peace! I ſhould have ſaid—Mary, if during the time that we have lived together, a word has ever paſſed my lips which could offend you, tell me, before you quit me for ever, that you forgive me. I ſhould have ſaid—Farewell, my deareſt Mary! ſince I am deſtined never to ſee you more, farewell! Be happy; though far removed from me, be happy." Then, ſeeing his mother and Madame de la Tour in tears, he added—" You muſt now ſeek for ſome other to comfort you!" and, leaving them abruptly, he went to wander

wander about the valley, and viſit all the ſpots which Mary had moſt frequented. To the goats and kids, which ran bleating after him, he ſaid: "Why do you follow me? You will no longer find her with me who uſed to careſs you and give you food." When he went to her favourite fountain, and the birds came hovering round him, he cried out: "Unfortunate as you are! the kind hand which uſed to feed you will feed you no more." And, ſeeing Tayo, who ran before him, queſting in the paths, he ſighed, and ſaid—"Alas! you will never find her again." At length, he went and ſat down upon the bank where ſhe had talked to him the evening before, and, looking towards the ſea where the veſſel had diſappeared, he ſhed a torrent of tears.

We followed him from place to place, apprehending ſome fatal conſequence from the agitation of his mind. His mother and Madame de la Tour conjured him, in the moſt affectionate terms, not to add to their grief by his deſpair. At laſt he was a little calmed by the tender appellations of Madame de la Tour, who called him Son, Beloved ſon, The deſtined huſband of her daughter. And ſhe prevailed upon him to come into the houſe, and to take ſome nouriſhment. He ſat down to table with us, taking his place next to that which uſed to be occupied by the companion of his childhood, and he ſpoke to her as if ſhe was ſtill there, and offered her ſuch things as ſhe uſed to like; and then, as if he ſuddenly recollected her departure, he burſt into tears. The following days he collected together

ther every thing which had been particularly appropriated to her uſe; the laſt flowers ſhe had worn, and a cocco-ſhell cup out of which ſhe had been accuſtomed to drink; and theſe precious remains, as his deareſt treaſure, he kiſſed and put into his boſom. Whatever has been touched by a beloved object, becomes ſweeter to the lover than the perfume of amber. After ſome time, ſeeing that his bitter regrets increaſed thoſe of his mother and Madame de la Tour, and that the wants of the family required his unremitted labour, he began to work with Domingo in the garden.

And ſoon, this young man, who before had all the indifference of a Creole for every thing which paſſes in the world, deſired me to teach him to read and write, that he might be able to correſpond with Mary.

Mary. Afterwards he wiſhed to be inſtructed in geography, that he might form ſome idea of the country where ſhe was to land; and in hiſtory, that he might know the manners of the people with whom ſhe was to live. It was with the ſame views that he had before perfected himſelf in agriculture, and had learnt the art of making the rougheſt parts of their little territory agreeable.—Love was in all the motive; and we are certainly indebted to this ardent and reſtleſs paſſion for moſt of the improvements of life; to the pleaſures which it ſeeks, we owe the ſciences and the arts; and from its privations aroſe that philoſophy which teaches us to bear every thing. Thus nature, which made love the band to unite all beings, made it alſo the firſt moving power in ſociety.

ciety, and the cauſe of almoſt all our pleaſures and acquirements.

Paul did not find much amuſement in the ſtudy of geography, which, inſtead of deſcribing the nature of each country, only gives its political diviſions. Hiſtory, particularly modern hiſtory, intereſted him as little. He only ſaw general and periodical evils, without being able to diſtinguiſh their ſource. Wars, which ſeemed to have neither cauſe nor end; intricate cabals; nations without energy, and princes without humanity. He preferred to ſuch ſtudies the reading of romances, which, relating more to the ſentiments and the intereſts of men, ſometimes preſented to his view ſituations which had a near reſemblance to his own: and Telemachus was the work from which he received the moſt pleaſure, from its

its pictures of ſimple life, and the deſcription of thoſe paſſions which are natural to the human heart. He read to his mother and Madame de la Tour ſuch parts as moſt affected him; and then tender recollections preſſing upon his mind, his voice faltered, and his eyes filled with tears. The dignity and wiſdom of Antiope, and the tenderneſs and ſorrows of Eucharis, appeared to him all united in Mary. But he was quite loſt and confounded when he read our faſhionable novels, ſo corrupt both in their manners and morals; and when he was told that theſe conſtituted a true picture of ſociety in Europe, he trembled, and not without ſome degree of reaſon, leſt Mary ſhould be perverted and forget him.

Two years in effect had paſſed away, and Madame de la Tour had had do letter from her aunt, or from

from her daughter; ſhe had only heard, from other hands, that Mary had landed ſafely in France. At length ſhe received, by a veſſel which was on its paſſage to India, a pacquet and a letter written in Mary's own hand. Notwithſtanding the caution with which her kind and affectionate child expreſſed herſelf, Madame de la Tour ſaw plainly that ſhe was unhappy. This letter was ſo good a picture of her character and her ſituation, that I took a copy of it, and I can repeat it, I believe, almoſt word for word.

" My dear beloved mother,

" I have already written ſeveral letters to you with my own hand; but having received no anſwer, I have reaſon to fear that they did not reach you. I have better hopes

hopes of this, from the precautions I have taken to forward it to you, and to receive your anſwer.

" I have ſhed many tears ſince our ſeparation.—I, who had never wept before, but for the misfortunes of others! My great aunt expreſſed much ſurpriſe, when ſhe queſtioned me about my improvements, and I told her that I could neither read nor write. She aſked what I had been learning ever ſince I came into the world; and when I told her, that it was to take care of the houſe, and do what you ordered me, ſhe ſaid I had been brought up like a menial ſervant. The next day ſhe ſent me to ſchool at a large abbey near Paris, where I had all ſorts of maſters: amongſt others things, I was taught hiſtory, geography, grammar, mathematics, and to ride on horſeback; but I have ſo little

little genius for any of theſe acquirements, that I am ſure I ſhall make no progreſs. I am ſenſible that I have, as they all tell me, a very feeble underſtanding. The kindneſs of my aunt, however, is not diminiſhed. She gives me new cloaths every change of ſeaſon; and I have two waiting-maids, who are as well dreſſed as myſelf. She makes me take the title of Counteſs, and inſiſts on my no longer calling myſelf De la Tour—a name as dear to me as to yourſelf, from what you have told me of my father, and all that he ſuffered before he obtained you. She has, however, given me your maiden name, and that too is dear to me, becauſe it once was yours. As I found myſelf in a ſituation ſo affluent, I deſired her to ſend ſome little ſupply to you. How can I relate her anſwer? but you

wiſh

wiſh me to tell you the exact truth: ſhe ſaid, that a ſmall ſum would be of no uſe to you, and that, in the kind of life you led, a large one would be rather an incumbrance.

" I intended to have employed ſome perſon here to write for me, as ſoon as I came; but finding no one in whom I could place a confidence, I applied myſelf night and day to learn to write myſelf, and, thank Heaven, I made myſelf miſtreſs of it in a ſhort time. I gave my firſt letters to the ladies who wait upon me, and deſired that they might be ſent to you; but I have reaſon to think that they carried them to my great aunt. I have now recourſe to one of the boarders, who expreſſes a friendſhip for me; and I deſire that your anſwers may be encloſed to her,

her, with the under-written direction.

" My aunt has forbid me to have any correſpondence whatever, as ſhe ſays it might prove an obſtacle to thoſe advantages ſhe has in view for me. Nobody is allowed to ſee me at the grate, excepting herſelf and an old nobleman, who has, ſhe ſays, taken a liking to my perſon. To ſay the truth, I ſhould have no liking for him, were it indeed poſſible that I could feel intereſted for any body here.

I am ſurrounded with all the ſplendor of wealth, but I have not the diſpoſal of a farthing: they ſay, that if I were allowed money, it might be of ill conſequence. Even my cloaths belong to my women, and they quarrel about them before I have done wearing them. In the midſt of riches I

am

am poorer than I was when with you; for I have nothing to give.

When I found that my fine acquirements would not furniſh me with the means of doing the leaſt ſervice to any body, I had recourſe to needle-work, which you had happily taught me; and I ſend you ſeveral pair of ſtockings, which I have made for you, and for my mama Margaret, a cap for Domingo, and one of my red handkerchiefs for Frances. I encloſe alſo ſome kernels of fruits which I had at my deſerts, and ſeeds of all the trees which grow in the park belonging to the abbey, which I collected in my hours of recreation. There are alſo ſome ſeeds of violets, daiſies, poppies, corn-flowers, butter-cups, and ſcabiouſes, which I picked up in my walks. The flowers in the fields are more beautiful here than with us; but they

are entirely diſregarded. I am ſure that you and my mama Margaret will be more pleaſed with this bag of ſeeds, than you were with the purſe-full of piaſtres which was the cauſe of our ſeparation, and of my ſorrow. It will be a great pleaſure to me if you ſhould one day ſee apple-trees growing by the ſide of our bananas, and beeches mixing their boughs with thoſe of the coco-trees: you will think yourſelf tranſported to Normandy, which you love ſo much.

You enjoined me to tell you all my pleaſures and my pains: I can have no joy when I am ſeparated from you: as for my ſorrows, I appeaſe them as much as I can, by conſidering that I am in a ſituation where you, in obedience to the will of God, have placed mè. The moſt painful circumſtance to me here is the having no one who

can

can talk to me of you, and I cannot talk of you to any body. My chamber-women, or rather my aunt's, tell me, when I attempt to introduce any converſation relating to what is deareſt to my heart, that I am a French woman, and that I ought to think no more of a ſavage country. Alas! I muſt forget myſelf before I can forget my native land, and the place where you reſide! This is to me a ſavage country, for I live in it alone, without one human being to whom I can impart the love and tenderneſs I have for you, and which I ſhall carry with me to the grave.

Dear and moſt beloved parent,
I am your very affectionate
and obedient child,

MARY DE LA TOUR.

" I recom-

" I recommend to your care and friendſhip Frances and Domingo, who were ſo careful of me in my infancy ; and pray careſs Tayo for me, who found me in the woods."

Paul was amazed to find that he was not named in the letter, when even the dog belonging to the houſe had been remembered by her ; but he did not know, that, however long the letter, a woman never mentions what is neareſt to her heart till the end.

In a Poſtſcript, Mary particularly recommended to the care of Paul two ſorts of ſeed, the violet and the ſcabious : ſhe gave him ſome directions with regard to the nature of the plants, and the places where they would be moſt likely to ſucceed. " The violet," ſhe ſaid, " is as little flower of a deep

blue, which loves to hide itſelf in the buſhes; but it is diſcovered by its delightful fragrance." She deſired him to ſow it upon the edge of the fountain, at the foot of her coco-tree. "The ſcabious," ſhe added, "bears a flower of a very tender blue, with a dark eye, ſpeckled with white. It ſeems in mourning, and is for that reaſon called the widow's flower. It delights in arid ſoils, and in ſituations expoſed to the wind." She deſired him to put this flower upon the rock, where ſhe had talked to him for the laſt time, the evening before ſhe left the iſland, and, for her ſake, to call it for the future, *The Farewell Rock.*

She had put theſe ſeeds into a little purſe, of which the texture was ſimple, but which appeared above all price in the eyes of Paul, when he perceived a V. and an M. interwoven

interwoven together in a cypher, and worked in hair, which, by its beauty, he knew to be her own.

The letter of this amiable and good girl affected them all. Madame de la Tour immediately anſwered it, and deſired her, in the name of the whole family, either to ſtay or return, as ſhe choſe; aſſuring her, that they had all, in loſing her, loſt their greateſt happineſs, and that, for herſelf, nothing could conſole her.

Paul wrote a very long letter, in which he told her, that he ſhould endeavour to make the garden worthy to receive her, and that he would mingle the plants of Europe and Africa, as ſhe had combined the letters of their names in her embroidery. He ſent her ſome coco-nuts from her fountain, which were arrived to maturity; but he told her, that he would

ſend no other ſeeds from the iſland, that her deſire to ſee all its productions might be an additional motive to haſten her home: and he conjured her to comply with the ardent vows and wiſhes of the family for her return, and, above all, with his, who could know no happineſs without her.

Paul ſowed the European ſeeds with the utmoſt care, and particularly the violet and ſcabious, whoſe flowers ſeemed to bear ſome analogy to the character and ſituation of Mary, and which were endeared to him by her having recommended them to his attention; but they had either been ſpoiled in the voyage, or the climate of this part of Africa is unfavourable to them, for but few of them came up, and thoſe did not arrive to perfection.

Envy, in the mean time, which often precedes good fortune, particularly

ticularly in theſe colonies, had ſpread reports in the iſland which gave much anxiety to Paul. Some of the paſſengers, on board the veſſel which had brought Mary's letter, affirmed, that ſhe was ſoon to be married; they mentioned the name of the nobleman who was to marry her; and ſome went ſo far as to aſſert that the marriage had actually taken place, and that they had been preſent at it. At firſt, Paul diſregarded news brought by trading veſſels, knowing how common it is for them to ſpread falſe reports where they land; but, as many of the inhabitanrs, with a ſort of malicious pity, affected to take part in his diſappointment, he began to have ſome apprehenſion that it might be true: and having beſides, in many novels that he had read, found that falſehood was looked upon only as a ſort of pleaſantry

ſantry in Europe, and knowing that theſe books were a faithful picture of European manners, he feared that Mary might have her mind perverted, and forget her firſt engagements. He was made unhappy already by his knowledge: but what moſt contributed to raiſe his doubts, was the arrival of ſeveral European ſhips, which touched here in the courſe of the following year, and which brought no tidings of her.

The unfortunate young man, in the diſtreſs and agitation of his mind, often came to me, ſeeking, in my experience of the world, ſomething to confirm or to baniſh his doubts.

I live, as I told you before, about a league and and a half from hence, upon the banks of a ſmall river, which runs near the long mountain: there I paſs my life in ſolitude,

ſolitude, without wife or child, and without ſlaves

Next to the happineſs of meeting with a companion of a kindred mind, and of a taſte and diſpoſition ſuited to our own; a bleſſing which is the lot of few; the ſtate leaſt unhappy is that of ſolitude. All men, who have been ill treated by the world, ſeek retirement. It is an extraordinary circumſtance, and worthy to be remarked, that all thoſe nations which are unfortunate in their government, in their opinions, or in their morals, have produced numerous claſſes of citizens, who have devoted themſelves to ſolitude and celibacy: ſuch were the Egyptians in their decline; the Greeks of the Lower Empire; and ſuch, in our days, are the Indians, the Chineſe, the modern Greeks, the Italians, and moſt of the Eaſtern

ern and Southern nations of Europe. Solitude reſtores to man, in ſome degree, his natural happineſs, by averting ſocial evils. In our ſocieties, which are diſunited by ſo many prejudices, the mind is perpetually agitated: we are continually revolving all the turbulent and contradictory opinions with which the members of wretched and ambitious ſects endeavour to ſubdue each other. But in ſolitude, the ſtrange illuſions diſappear: man recovers the ſimple perceptions of his being, of the creation, and of the Creator. Like the troubled water of a torrent, which lays waſte the fields, if it finds a ſilent bed remote from its courſe, it regains its limpid clearneſs, and reflects its own banks, and the verdure of the earth, and the azure of the ſky. Solitude, too, reſtores health to the body,

as well as harmony to the mind. It is in the claſs of men devoted to ſolitude, that are to be found the moſt extraordinary inſtances of longevity; as amongſt the Bramins of India. Indeed, I think it ſo eſſential to happineſs, even in the world, that it appears to me impoſſible to have a permanent ſatisfaction in any opinions, or to regulate our conduct upon any certain principles, if we do not make to ourſelves a ſort of interior ſolitude, from which our ſentiments are ſeldom allowed to eſcape, and into which the opinions of others are never ſuffered to enter. I do not ſay, however, that man ſhould live entirely ſecluded; he is connected by his weakneſs and his neceſſities with all the human race; he owes his labour therefore to man; he owes himſelf to all nature. But, as Heaven has given

us organs perfectly adapted to the globe which we inhabit; feet to walk; lungs to breathe the air; eyes to ſee; and that we cannot pervert the uſe of theſe ſenſes; he has reſerved for himſelf, who is the author of life, the heart, which is its principal organ.

I paſs my days, as I have already told you, far removed from the world, which I would have ſerved, and by which I have been perſecuted. After long travels over moſt of the countries of Europe, and ſome parts of America and Africa, I ſettled at laſt in this thinly-inhabited iſland, attracted by its mild air, and its vaſt deſerts. A hut, which I built in the foreſt, at the foot of a tree; a piece of land, cultivated by my own labour; a river, which runs by my door; are all that I require for my wants or my pleaſures; and

I have

I have the additional enjoyment of ſuch books as inſtruct me how to become better. By their means, even the world which I have quitted is made to contribute to my preſent tranquillity, by preſenting pictures of thoſe paſſions which render its inhabitants wretched; and when I compare their lot with mine, I feel that I poſſeſs at leaſt a negative happineſs. Like a man who has eſcaped to a rock, after the wreck of a veſſel, I contemplate, from my aſylum, the ſtorms which ſpread devaſtation over the reſt of the globe; and the diſtant ſound of the tempeſt ſeems to add to the calmneſs of my ſituation. Now that I am no longer in the way of men, that they are not in mine, I pity them, but do not hate them. If I meet with any one in diſtreſs, I endeavour to aſſiſt him with my advice, as a traveller by the

the ſide of a torrent ſtretches out his hand to a wretch who is fallen into it. But the innocent only attend to my voice: Nature ſpeaks to the reſt in vain; her image is by each cloathed with their own paſſions; they purſue through life the phantom which leads them aſtray, and then complain to Heaven, of errors which were of their own creation. Amongſt the number of the wretched whom I have endeavoured to bring back to nature, I never found one who was not faſcinated by what had occaſioned his miſery. They all liſtened to me at firſt, expecting that I ſhould aſſiſt them in the acquirement of either riches or honours; but when they found that what I wiſhed to teach, was to do without them, they pitied me for not being engaged in the ſame wretched purſuits; they blamed my recluſe life; they called

ed

ed themſelves the only claſs of men uſeful to the world, and endeavoured to draw me into the ſame vortex. I converſe freely with all men, and hear their opinions; but am no longer governed by them. Sometimes I ſerve as a leſſon to myſelf; in the preſent calm that I enjoy, I go over in my mind all the former agitations of my own life, to which I gave ſuch importance; fortune, patronage, fame, pleaſure, and the opinions which are diſputed in all parts of the world. I compare thoſe men whom I have ſeen engaged in fierce conteſts, and who are now no more, to the rapid currents which foam and daſh againſt the rocks, and then diſappear, to return no more for ever. As for me, I glide peaceably down the ſtream of time, towards the depths of futurity, where all ſhores ceaſe; and,

and, from contemplating the harmonious ſyſtem of nature, I raiſe my mind to its Creator, and hope for a happier lot in ſome future world.

Though in the view from my hermitage, which is in the middle of a wood, there is not that variety of objects which we ſee from this height, there is ſuch a diſpoſition of the different parts, as makes the ſituation very pleaſing, particularly to a man who deſires leſs to extend his thoughts than to revolve them in his own boſom. The river which paſſes by my houſe runs ſtrait through the wood, ſo that I ſee a long reach of it from my door, overſhadowed with trees of various foilage. Tamacks, ebony, and what we hear call apple-wood, olives, and cinnamon. Groves of palmetto raiſe their upright and naked columns to the height of an hundred feet,

and

and their tufted tops, ſtanding high above the reſt, ſeem like one foreſt growing upon another. Various ſorts of creepers hang from tree to tree, and form feſtoons and arches of flowers, and long draperies of green foliage. The aromatic gums with which they abound, fill the air with ſo rich a perfume, that a man who has paſſed through the wood, can perceive the ſmell of them in his cloaths for ſome hours afterwards. In the flowering ſeaſon, you would imagine that the trees were half covered with ſnow. Towards the end of the ſummer, many ſpecies of foreign birds, led by an incomprehenſible inſtinct, croſs the immenſe ocean, from unknown regions, and come to feed upon the various ſeeds produced in the iſland, and the vivid colours of their plumage make a beautiful contraſt with the brown tints

tints of the leaves ſcorched by the ſummer ſun. Amongſt others, there are many ſorts of lories and blue pigeons, which are here called Dutch pigeons. All the monkey tribe, conſtant inhabitants of theſe woods, play amongſt the branches, and are diſtinguiſhed from the bark by the green or grey colour of their coats and their black faces; ſome hang from the boughs by their tail, and ſwing backwards and forwards in the air; others leap from tree to tree, holding their little ones to their boſom. The report of no murderous weapen ever frightened theſe peaceful children of nature. Nothing is heard but ſounds of joy, and the notes and unknown warblings of ſouthern birds, which are repeated by the echoes of the foreſt. The river, which runs rapidly over a bed of ſtone, in its glaſſy ſtream, reflects

at

at once the venerable maſſes of ſhade, and the wanton plays of their happy people. About a thouſand paces below, it is formed into a caſcade by rocks: at the top it is a broad ſheet of water, tranſparent as cryſtal; but being broken in its fall, it is precipitated to the bottom in white foam. A thouſand confuſed ſounds are formed by the tumultuous torrent, which the wind ſometimes carries to a diſtance, and ſometimes unites and brings all collected to the ear at once, deafening the ſenſe. The air, conſtantly agitated by the current of water, preſerves upon the banks of this river, even during the burning heats of ſummer, a coolneſs and verdure which are ſcarcely to be met with upon the higheſt parts of the iſland.

At ſome diſtance beyond, far enough removed from the caſcade for

for us not to be diſturbed by the noiſe, and yet ſo near as to enjoy its beauty, and the freſhneſs of the air, we uſed ſometimes, during the great heats, to dine together under a rock; Madame de la Tour, Margaret, Paul, Mary, and myſelf. As Mary's moſt common actions were always directed to ſome good purpoſe, ſhe never eat a fruit, when ſhe was in theſe parties, without putting the ſeed or kernal into the ground. "Theſe will hereafter produce trees," ſhe uſed to ſay, "whoſe fruit will be eaten by ſome traveller, or at leaſt by ſome bird." One day, after eating a papayer in this ſpot, ſhe ſowed the ſeeds of it; and ſoon ſeveral young plants came up, amongſt which there was one female, that is, one which bears ſeed. When ſhe left the iſland it was not ſo tall as a child; but, as it is

of

of quick growth, it was, three years afterwards, twenty feet high, and its ſtem ſurrounded at the top with ſeveral rows of ripe fruit. Paul coming accidentally to the place, felt a ſudden emotion of pleaſure at the ſight of a large tree, raiſed from a ſeed which he remembered to have been planted by Mary; but it as ſuddenly made him recollect her long abſence, and filled him with deep regret. The objects which we ſee every day do not make us ſenſible of the ſwiftneſs with which time paſſes away; they grow old as we do, by gradual and imperceptible decay; but thoſe which we have loſt ſight of for ſome years, and then ſuddenly meet with again, remind us of the rapidity with which the ſtream of life flows from us. Paul felt the ſame ſurpriſe at the ſight of this tree loaded with fruit, which a traveller,

traveller, after a long abſence, would feel when he returned to his country, if, inſtead of his former companions, he found their children, whom he had left in their cradles, grown up and become fathers themſelves. At firſt he would have cut it down, becauſe it marked too cruelly the length of time which ſhe had been abſent; but then, conſidering it as a teſtimony of her general beneficence, he kiſſed the bark, and and uttered a thouſand expreſſions of love and tenderneſs. Sacred tree! whoſe deſcendants now exiſt in our foreſts, I have myſelf beheld you with more pleaſure than the triumphal arches of the Romans! May time, which deſtroys the monuments of ambition, multiply thoſe of virtuous poverty!

At the foot of this tree, I was ſure to meet Paul when he came to

to my part of the country. One day that I found him here, oppreſſed with grief, I had a converſation with him, which I will relate to you, if you are not tired of my long digreſſions: they are excuſable at my age, and upon the ſubject of my laſt affections.

He began with ſaying, "I am very unhappy! Mademoiſelle de la Tour has been abſent three years and a half, and, during the laſt year and half, we have not heard from her. She is rich; I am poor; and ſhe has forgotten me! I have a mind to embark and go to France; I will enter into the King's ſervice; by that means I ſhall acquire a fortune; and when I have obtained riches and honours, her aunt will conſent to our marriage."

"My dear friend!" ſaid I, "did you not tell me yourſelf, that you had no rank?"

"My

" My mother told me ſo," he anſwered: " as for me, I don't know what is meant by rank. I never perceived that I had leſs than others, or that others had more than myſelf."

" The want of rank," I replied, " will exclude you from all great poſts in France. You could not even be admitted into any diſtinguiſhed regiment."

" I have," " ſaid he, " often heard you mention, as one cauſe of the greatneſs of France, that the loweſt ſubject might riſe to the higheſt honours; and you have even quoted many celebrated names, who, from an obſcure ſituation, had become the glory of their country. Why would you diſcourage me?"

" My dear child!" I ſaid, " I will never diſcourage you. I told you what was true of paſt times; but

but all is now changed. Every thing is become venal; every thing is looked upon as a patrimony of a few families, or the property of certain bodies of men: the king, like the ſun in the midſt of clouds, is ſurrounded by them, and it is almoſt impoſſible that even one ray ſhould fall upon you.

" Formerly, in a leſs complicated adminiſtration, ſuch phenomena have been ſeen; and then virtues and talents were unfolded on every ſide, like newly-cultivated land, which gives out all its nouriſhment. But ſuch kings as are able to judge accurately of the characters of men, and to ſelect them properly, are rare. In general, they ſuffer themſelves to be led by the courtiers who ſurround them."

" But

" But perhaps," he ſaid, " I may meet with ſome of theſe great men, who will patronize me."

" In order to obtain the protection of the great," I anſwered, " it is neceſſary to ſerve them in their views of ambition, or in their pleaſures; and you cannot ſucceed amongſt them, for you are without rank, and you have probity and honour."

" But, I ſhall be ſo daring, ſo faithful, ſo diligent, ſo exact in all my duty," he replied, " that I ſhall deſerve to be adopted by ſome one amongſt them, acccording to the cuſtom, of which I have ſeen accounts, in the ancient hiſtories that you have given me to read."

" Virtue," ſaid I, " amongſt the Greeksa nd Romans, even in their decline, was held in reſpect by men

men in power; but of the number of celebrated characters, which have from obſcurity been raiſed to fame, I do not know one, who has been adopted by any great family. Were it not for our kings, virtue would remain for ever plebeian. Sometimes they treat it with reſpect, when it becomes known to them; but the diſtinctions, which formerly were its reward, are now obtained only by money."

"If I cannot acquire the friendſhip of a man in power," he anſwered, "I will endeavour to make myſelf acceptable to ſome body of men. By entering into their views, and adopting their opinions, I ſhall gain their affection."

"You will then be like other Europeans," I replied; you will give up your principles to acquire fortune."

"Oh no!" ſaid he, "I ſhall always ſeek the truth."

"You would perhaps in that caſe," I anſwered, "make them enemies inſtead of friends. Beſides, bodies of men are very little intereſted in the diſcovery of truth. The ambitious only deſire power, and are perfectly indifferent about all opinions."

"Unfortunate as I am," he cried, "I am every way diſappointed, I am condemned to paſs an obſcure laborious life, and abſent from Mary!" And he gave a deep ſigh.

"Let Heaven be your only patron," ſaid I, "and look upon the human race as the body that you would ſerve. Be conſtant in your duty to both. Great families, communities, kings, people, have their prejudices and their paſſions; their ſervice often requires

quires the practice of vice. Heaven and mankind are ſerved by the practice of virtue.

" But why do you wiſh to diſtinguiſh yourſelf from other men? It cannot be a natural deſire; becauſe, if it was common to all, each man would be in a ſtate of warfare with his neighbour. Be ſatisfied with the exerciſe of your duty in the ſtate in which Providence has placed you; and bleſs your lot, which enables you to judge and act for yourſelf; which does not make your happineſs depend on the opinion of the multitude, like men in high ſtations; or oblige you meanly to court the favour of the great for mere ſupport, which is too often the fate of poverty. You are in a country, and in a ſituation, in which you can obtain all the neceſſaries of life, without being obliged to deceive, or flatter, or debaſe yourſelf, like

moſt of thoſe who are in ſearch of fortune in Europe. In your ſtate you may be allowed the exerciſe of every virtue: you may, with impunity, be honeſt, faithful, ſincere, informed, patient, temperate, chaſte, mild, forgiving, pious; and no ſenſe of ridicule will deſtroy your judgment, which is now only opening. Heaven has bleſſed you with liberty, health, a good conſcience, and friends. The kings, whoſe favour you wiſh to obtain, are not ſo happy."

"Alas!" he anſwered, "it is Mary only that I want! Without her I have nothing; poſſeſſed of her I ſhould have every thing. She is to me rank, honour, riches. But, ſince celebrity is neceſſary in order to obtain her, I muſt acquire celebrity. By books and application I ſhall become learned. I will make myſelf maſter of the ſciences.

I will

I will ſerve men by inſtructing them; and, without hurting any one, I ſhall acquire fame, and owe it only to myſelf."

"My dear Paul!" ſaid I, "talents are ſtill more rare than birth or riches; without doubt they are of more value, ſince no power can take them away, and that the eſteem of the public is always attached to them. But they coſt dear. They are to be acquired only by privations of every kind, by a delicacy of feeling which occaſions great unhappineſs, both in our own minds, and in our commerce with ſociety, from the perſecution of cotemporaries. The ſoldier is not envied by the men of the law, the ſeaman is not envied by the ſoldier; but all enter the liſts with a man of genius; for all think they have pretenſions. You talk of doing good to men!

He

He that produces two blades of graſs where before there grew but one, renders them a more eſſential ſervice than the man who writes a book for them."

"Oh! the planter of this tree," cried Paul, "made a ſweeter and more uſeful preſent to the inhabitants of this foreſt, than if ſhe had given them many volumes!" and he put his arms about the trunk, and eagerly kiſſed the bark.

"The beſt of all books," I continued, "which teaches nothing but equality, love, peace, and concord — the Goſpel — has for ages ſerved as a pretence to the Europeans for all the horrors of bloodſhed. What tyrannies are ſtill exerciſed in its name! After this, who can flatter themſelves with the expectation of being uſeful to men by their writings? Recollect the hiſtory of

almoſt

almoſt all the philoſophers who have taught them wiſdom. Homer, whoſe leſſons were cloathed in ſuch beautiful poetry, depended upon alms for his ſupport. Socrates, whoſe life and converſation were as mild and as amiable as his doctrine, was condemned by the Athenians to ſuffer death by poiſon. His ſublime diſciple, Plato, was delivered up to bondage, by order of the prince who ſhould have protected him; and before them Pythagoras, who extended his humanity even to the brute creation, was burnt alive by the inhabitants of Croton. And that is not all—moſt of theſe illuſtrious names have deſcended to us diſfigured by ſome ſtroke of ſatire, which characteriſes them in the opinion of an ungrateful world; and if, amongſt the number, the fame of a few has arrived pure and unſullied

unfullied to us, it is becauſe thoſe few lived retired, and did nor mix with their contemporaries: like the ſtatues that are dug up entire in the fields of Greece and Italy, and which, from having been buried in the boſom of the earth, have eſcaped the fury of barbarous nations.

"In order therefore to acquire the dangerous fame that is obtained by learning, you find that much virtue is requiſite; ſometimes even the ſacrifice of life itſelf. You think, perhaps, that this ſort of fame has attractions for thoſe who are poſſeſſed of great wealth in France! They care little for men of letters, whoſe talents procure neither rank, nor power, nor even admiſſion at court. There is indeed but little perſecution, in an age in which every thing is regarded with indifference, excepting pleaſure and riches; but virtue

tue and knowledge cannot hope for any diſtinguiſhed reward, where every employment in the ſtate is ſold for money. Formerly their recompence was certain in the church, the magiſtracy, or in the adminiſtration; but now they are of no uſe but to make books. The production is ſtill, however, worthy of its divine origin; for to theſe writings it is reſerved to give conſolation to the unfortune, to raiſe modeſt merit, to enlighten nations, and to ſpeak truth even to kings: the moſt ſublime employment which Heaven can beſtow upon man. Who would not be conſoled for the injuſtice or contempt of thoſe who are now in power, by reflecting that his work may deſcend to future ages, and ſucceeding nations, a bulwark againſt error, and a curb to tyranny; and that from the boſom of

obſcurity in which he lived, there will ariſe a ſplendor of fame, which will efface that of the kings and princes of the earth; whoſe monuments are loſt in oblivion, in ſpite of the flattery which raiſes them?"

"Alas!" anſwered Paul, "I do not deſire theſe honours, but that Mary may ſhare them, and have the eſteem of the whole world. But you, who have acquired ſo much learning, tell me if I ſhall obtain her in marriage. I ſhould wiſh for ſo much knowledge, as to be able to look into futurity."

"Oh, my dear friend!" ſaid I, "who would wiſh for life if he knew what was to happen? If an evil which we only apprehend, is capable of giving us ſo much vain diſquiet; the certain expectation of one, would embitter all our days.

days. So far from deſiring to know the future, we ought not even to conſider the preſent too deeply. Providence, which gave us reflection to provide againſt our wants, gave us wants to ſet bounds to our reflections."

"However," ſaid he, "you tell me, that rank and honours are to be purchaſed in France with money. I will go to Bengal and make a fortune there, that I may afterwards marry Mary in Europe. I will immediately embark.

I aſked him, if he could reſolve to abandon his mother, and the mother of Mary?

He reminded me of having myſelf adviſed his going to India, ſome time before.

"Mary was then here," I ſaid; "but you are now their only ſupport."

"Mary

" Mary will be able to aſſiſt them," he anſwered, " by means of her rich relation."

" When the rich give," I replied, " it is generally to thoſe from whom they are likely to receive ſome credit in the world. Many, that are in affluence, have relations much more diſtreſſed in their circumſtances than Madame de la Tour is, who, for want of a trifling aſſiſtance, have ſacrificed their liberty for bread, and paſs their lives immured in convents."

" O let not Mary remain in ſuch a country!" he cried. " Let her come back to us! What need had ſhe of a rich relation? She was ſo happy under theſe thatched roofs; ſo beautiful with only a pink handkerchief or a few flowers about her head!—O Mary, return! Quit your ſuperb apartments and your

your magnificence. Come back to theſe rocks, to the ſhade of theſe woods, and to our cocoa-trees. Alas! you are perhaps now unhappy"—and his eyes filled with tears. "O! hide nothing from me. If you cannot tell me whether Mary will be mine, tell me at leaſt if ſhe ſtill loves me, ſurrounded as ſhe is by thoſe great men, who enjoy the favour of the king."

"Yes, my good friend," I anſwered, "I am ſure that ſhe loves you, and I have many reaſons for believing it; but the ſtrongeſt is, that ſhe has a virtuous mind." Tranſported with theſe words, he embraced me with an ecſtaſy of joy.

"But do you think," ſaid he, "that the European women are as faithleſs as they are repreſented to be in plays, and in ſome of the books

books which you have furniſhed me with?"

"Women cannot be faithful," I anſwered, "where men are tyrants. Art muſt always be the conſequence of tyranny."

"How is it poſſible?" ſaid Paul, "How can a man become the tyrant of a woman?"

"By not conſulting their inclinations," I replied; "by uniting thoſe who are not ſuited to each other in age, or diſpoſition; by marrying a mild, affectionate woman, perhaps, to a cold auſtere man."

"But," ſaid Paul, "why not unite thoſe who ſuit each other; who are of the ſame age, and who love one another?"

"Becauſe moſt of the young people in France," I anſwered, "have ſmall fortunes, and that they do not acquire a fund, ſufficient

cient to enable them to marry, till they are advanced in years. In their youth, they ſeduce the wives of others, and after a youth ſo paſſed, they cannot become the object of a laſting attachment. They begin with deceiving others, and are themſelves deceived in their turn: it is a neceſſary conſequence, and according to the laws of univerſal juſtice, by which the world is governed. One error always balances another. In this manner the Europeans in general paſs their lives; and the two-fold diſorder is increaſed, when the wealth of the country is accumulated in few hands. The ſtate may be conſidered as a garden, in which the ſmall trees do not flouriſh if large ones overſhadow them; but there is this difference, that the beauty of a garden may reſult from a few great trees; but the

the proſperity of a ſtate depends upon their number and equality of its ſubjects, and not upon a few rich men."

"Why is it neceſſary to be rich," ſaid he, "in order to marry?"

"That people may live in affluence and luxury," I anſwered, "and do nothing."

"But why ſhould not they work?" ſaid Paul, "I find no hardſhip in labour."

"Becauſe in Europe," I replied, "thoſe who are employed in manual labour are degraded; they are called mechanics. Thoſe who cultivate the land are the leaſt eſteemed of any. An artiſt is much more conſidered than a peaſant."

"Can that labour, upon which they depend for their exiſtence, be

be deſpiſed in Europe? ſaid he—"I do not underſtand you."

"No, it is not poſſible." I anſwered, "that a man, brought up as you have been, in the ſimplicity of nature, ſhould underſtand the depravity of ſociety. One may form an idea of what is conſiſtent and according to order; but not of confuſion and irregularity. Beauty, virtue, happineſs, have fixed and certain bounds; miſery, vice, deformity, have none."

"The rich are very happy!" ſaid Paul. "They meet with no obſtacles. They may indulge thoſe they love with every gratification, every enjoyment."

"They have, moſt of them," I anſwered, "worn out all pleaſures, becauſe they procure them without difficulty. You know by experience, that the pleaſure of repoſe

repoſe muſt be purchaſed by fatigue; that of eating, by hunger; of drinking, by thirſt. That of loving and being beloved, is only to be acquired by a multitude of privations and ſacrifices. The rich loſe all theſe gratifications, becauſe their wants are prevented. And, added to the laſſitude which follows ſatiety, they have a pride proceeding from wealth, which makes them impatient of the loſs of pleaſure, though they have no enjoyment from the poſſeſſion of it. The odour of a thouſand roſes pleaſes but for a moment; the pain occaſioned by one of their thorns is long felt. One hardſhip, in the midſt of luxuries, is to the opulent a thorn amongſt flowers. To the poor, on the contrary, one indulgence, in the midſt of hardſhips, is a flower amongſt thorns. They have a

lively ſenſe of it. The effect of every thing is increaſed by contraſt. Nature meaſures with an equal hand. Which ſituation (all things conſidered) do you think is the more eligible, that in which there is nothing to hope, and every thing to fear; or one, in which there is nothing to fear, and every thing to hope? The former is the ſtate of the rich; the latter is that of the poor. But theſe extremes it is difficult for man to ſupport; for his happineſs conſiſts in mediocrity and virtue."

He aſked me, what I meant by virtue.

"You, my dear child," ſaid I, "who ſupport your parents by your labour, you want no definition of virtue. It is an effort that we make to get the better of our own inclinations, for the good of others,

from

from the pure motive of deſiring to obey the laws of God."

" How virtuous then is Mary! he anſwered. " Virtue made her accept of riches, that ſhe might be benificient. Virtue made her leave this iſland; and virtue will make her return to it." The idea of her return heated his imagination, and his fears vaniſhed. He fancied that ſhe was now upon her paſſage; that ſhe had not writen, becauſe ſhe was coming herſelf. With a good wind, the voyage, he obſerved, was very ſhort. He enumerated the veſſels which had performed it in leſs than three months, though it is four thouſand five hundred leagues. She might be on board of one which would make it in leſs—the marine was ſo improved; the ſhips were better built, and better worked. He talked of the arrangements

rangements which he ſhould make for her reception, the new apartment which he ſhould build, and the little pleaſures and amuſements which he ſhould contrive for her every day, when ſhe became his wife! Theſe thoughts tranſported him. "You, my dear friend," he added, "will no longer have occaſion to do any thing, excepting for your amuſement. As Mary will be rich, we ſhall have a number of negroes, who will be able to work for you. You will live with us, and add to our happineſs, and be without care, and at leiſure to purſue your own inclinations." He was quite loſt and intoxicated with the imaginary joy, and ready to run home to impart it to the family.

But violent apprehenſions are apt to ſucceed to warm hopes; for,

for, under the influence of a ſtrong paſſion, the mind falls from one extreme to the other. After ſuch ſanguine expectations, he would, perhaps the next day, return to me, quite oppreſſed with grief, and ſay, " Mary does not write to me: if it had been her intention to leave Europe, ſhe would have informed me of it. Alas! the reports concerning her were but too well founded. She is married to the nobleman for whom her aunt intended her. Mary, like many others, has been ſeduced by riches. In thoſe books, which pourtray the characters of women, virtue is conſidered only as the ſubject for a romance. If Mary had been really virtuous, ſhe would not have left me and her mother. Whilſt I am waſting my days, wholly occupied by her, ſhe thinks not of me! I am in affliction;

tion; ſhe is engaged by amuſements! Alas! that thought fills me with deſpair. All employment becomes painful to me, all ſociety irkſome. Would to Heaven that war was declared in India! for then I would go thither, and meet death."

"My dear friend," ſaid I, "the courage which makes a man ſeek death, is but momentary. It is often excited by the vain applauſe of men. There is a courage more neceſſary, and more uncommon —it is that patience which enables us to bear, in ſilence and in ſecret, all the croſſes and diſappointments of life. It is neither produced by the opinion of men or the impulſe of our own paſſions; but by ſubmiſſion to the will of Heaven. Patience is the true courage of virtue."

"Alas!"

" Alas!" he cried, " I am then devoid of virtue! Every thing conſpires to oppreſs me, and make me deſperate."

" To be poſſeſſed of an equal, conſtant, invariable virtue," I anſwered, " is not the nature of man. Amidſt the paſſions which agitate us, our reaſon is often obſcured and confounded; but there are lights, by which it may be reſtored. The aid of theſe lights we receive from letters, which are a help ſent from Heaven. They are rays of that wiſdom which governs the univerſe. Like the rays of the ſun, they enlighten, comfort, warm: they are a celeſtial fire; and, like the elementary fire, they convert all nature to our uſe. By their means we can aſſemble together about us all things, all ages, all places, and all men. They bring us back to the rules of human

man life; calm the paſſions; repreſs vice; and excite virtue by the example of thoſe great characters whoſe names they celebrate. They are the daughters of Heaven, who deſcend upon earth to charm the cares of the human race. Thoſe great writers whom they inſpire, have always appeared in the times which are moſt diſtreſsful to ſociety—in the ages of barbariſm, and the ages of depravity. Letters, my dear friend, have proved a conſolation to numberleſs men more unfortunate than yourſelf—Xenophon, baniſhed from his country, after having ſafely conducted home ten thouſand Greeks: Scipio Africanus, wearied out by the calumnies, and Lucullus, by the cabels, of the Romans: Catinat, with the ingratitude of his court. The ingenious Greeks aſſigned to each of the Muſes who preſide over letters, a

particular part of the underſtanding to direct. In like manner, we ſhould reſign our paſſions to their government, that they may reſtrain them with a bit and bridle. They have, with regard to the powers of our mind, the ſame functions as the Hours, which harneſſed and drove the courſers of the Sun. Apply yourſelf then to books, my dear friend. The ſages who have written before our time, are travellers who have preceded us in the paths of woe, and who ſtretch forth their hands to us, and invite us to join them, when all things elſe forſake us. A well-written book is a good friend!"

Alas!" cried Paul, "I wanted no books when Mary was here. She had no more learning than myſelf; but when ſhe looked at me, and called me her friend, it

was

was not poſſible to feel any diſtreſs."

"Certainly," ſaid I, "no friend can be like a miſtreſs by whom we are beloved. There is, beſides, in woman a lightneſs and chearfulneſs of diſpoſition, which ſoftens the ſevere temper of man. Her charms diſperſe the dark phantoms of the imagination; her countenance inſpires love and confidence. What pleaſure is not rendered more exquiſite by her participation? what cares are not baniſhed by her ſmiles? what anger can reſiſt her tears? Mary will return more of a philoſopher than you are. She will be ſurpriſed to find that the garden is neglected; ſhe, who has thought only of embelliſhing it, notwithſtanding the perſecution ſhe has met with from her aunt, and baniſhed as ſhe is from you and from her mother."

The expectation of Mary's return renewed his courage, and made him reſume his uſual occupations upon the farm—rendered happy in his labour, by propoſing an end to his employments which flattered his love!

One morning, at break of day, it was the 24th of December 1752, Paul, when he aroſe, perceived a white flag unfurled upon the mountain *de la Decouverte*, which was the ſign uſually given when a veſſel was deſcried off the coaſt. He ran to the town, to ſee if it brought any news of Mary. He waited till the return of the pilot, who was gone out, as is cuſtomary, to reconnoitre. He did not come back till night. He brought word to the Governor, that the veſſel was that St. Gerand, 700 tons, commanded by Capt. Aubin; that ſhe was four leagues out at ſea, and would

would not be able to make the port till the next evening; and not then, unleſs the wind proved favourable. There was at that time none. The pilot delivered to him all the letters which came from France. Amongſt the reſt, there was one for Madame de la Tour, directed in Mary's own hand. Paul immediately ſeized it, kiſſed it with tranſport, and ran home with it. When he was within ſight of the family, who were waiting for his return upon the Farewell Rock, he held up the letter in the air, without being able to ſpeak; and they all went directly to Madame de la Tour's houſe to hear it red. Mary informed her mother, that ſhe had been very ill treated by her great aunt, who would have forced her to marry againſt her inclinations; that ſhe had afterwards diſinherited her, and had now ſent her

her back at a time which neceſſarily occaſioned her to arrive during the ſtormy ſeaſon. She ſaid, ſhe had endeavoured to ſoften her, by reminding her of her former affection for Madame de la Tour, and what ſhe owed to her; but her aunt had only called her a ſilly girl, whoſe head was turned with romances. However, ſhe could now think of nothing but the happineſs of ſeeing and embracing her dear family, and that, in the impatience to gratify her ardent wiſhes to join them, ſhe would have embarked with the pilot, and have gone to land with him in his boat, if the Captain would have ſuffered it; but he had abſolutely refuſed to let her go, becauſe they were at a great diſtance from the ſhore, and that there appeared to be a prodigious ſwell out at ſea, notwithſtanding

notwithſtanding the ſtillneſs of the wind where they were.

All the family, in tranſports of joy, cried out, " Mary is come !" " Mary is come !" Servants and all embraced each other. Madame de la Tour deſired Paul to acquaint me with her arrival ; and immediately Domingo lighted a torch of round-wood, and he and Paul ſet out for my houſe.

It might be about ten o'clock at night. I had juſt extinguiſhed my lamp, and was gone to bed, when I perceived, through the paliſades of my cottage, a light in the wood. Soon after, I heard the voice of Paul calling out to me. I got up, and was ſcarcely dreſſed, when Paul ran to me, and, quite out of breath, took me in his arms, ſaying, " Let us go to the port ! Mary is arrived ! Let us go to the port ;

port; the veſſel will anchor there to-morrow at break of day."

We ſat out directly. After we had croſſed the woods of the Long Mountain, and were upon the road which leads from Pamplemouſſe to the port, I heard the footſteps of ſome one behind us. It was a negro, who was advancing in great haſte; and when he came up with us, I aſked him whence he came, and whither he was going? He ſaid, "I come from that diſtrict of the iſland, which is called Poudre d'or: I am ſent to give notice to the Governor, that a French ſhip, at anchor under the iſland of Amber, is firing minute guns: the ſea is ſtormy, and the veſſel is in diſtreſs." When he had done ſpeaking, he left us immediately, and hurried on.

"Let us go to the diſtrict of Poudre d'or," ſaid I, "we ſhall be

be nearer to the veſſel; it is but three leagues from hence." We turned back, and took the road which leads to the northern part of the iſland. There was a cloſe and ſuffocating heat. The moon was riſen, and ſurrounded with three obſcure circles. The ſky was of a fearful darkneſs.

By the flaſhes of lightning, which readily ſucceeded each other, we could perceive vaſt volumes of clouds, black and low, which were driven with impetuoſity from the ſea, though not a breeze was felt upon the land. They ſeemed to be collected together and to hover over the center of the iſland. As we went along the road, we thought we heard thunder; but ſtopping to liſten attentively, we found that it was the report of cannon, repeated by the echoes. Theſe diſtant guns, joined to the ſtormy appear-

ance of the ſky, made me tremble. I had no doubt that they were the ſignals of diſtreſs of ſome devoted veſſel. After half an hour, we heard the cannon no more. And the ceſſation was more dreadful and alarming than the mournful ſounds which had preceded it.

We haſtened forward without ſpeaking, or daring to communicate our apprehenſions to each other. Towards midnight we came, melted with heat, to the coaſt in the diſtrict of Poudre d'or. The waves daſhed with fury againſt the ſhore; the rocks and ſhingles were covered with froth white as ſnow, and ſparks of fire. Notwithſtanding the darkneſs of the night, we could diſtinguiſh, by theſe phoſphoric lights, the barks of the fiſhermen drawn in far upon the beach.

At

At ſome diſtance, near the entrance of a wood, we ſaw ſeveral of the inhabitants aſſembled round a fire. We went to them, in order to ſit down and wait there till morning. Whilſt we were ſitting near the fire, one of the company told us, that in the evening he had ſeen a veſſel in the open ſea, driving with a ſtrong current towards the iſland: that the darkneſs coming on he had loſt ſight of it; and that two hours afterwards he had heard diſtreſs guns, but there was ſo high a ſea, that no boat could venture out to her aſſiſtance: ſoon after, he thought he had ſeen her lanterns lighted, and if that was the fact, he ſhould apprehend that the veſſel, being come ſo near the ſhore, was run between the land and the iſle of Amber, miſtaken it perhaps for the point of Mira, which is the ſhip's road to Port Lewis;

Lewis ; and if that ſhould be the caſe, which, however, he could by no means be ſure of, the veſſel muſt be in the moſt imminent danger.—Another of them told us, that he had often croſſed the channel which divides the iſland of Amber from the coaſt ; that he had ſounded it ; that the bottom and the anchorage were good ; and that the veſſel would be as ſafe there as in the beſt harbour. " If I was on board a ſhip in that channel, with all that I am worth," ſaid he, " I ſhould be perfectly eaſy."—A third ſaid, that it was impoſſible for the veſſel to get into the channel at all ; for that there was hardly depth ſufficient for a fiſhing-boat. He aſſured us, that he had ſeen the veſſel at anchor beyond the iſle of Amber, ſo that if the wind ſhould raiſe in the morning, ſhe ſhould have it in her

her power, either to put out to ſea, or to make the harbour.—Several others alſo gave their opinions; they were all different; and whilſt they were arguing with one another about them, according to the cuſtom of Creoles who have nothing to do, Paul and I kept a profound ſilence. We ſtayed there till the firſt glimmering of the dawn; but there was not light enough to diſcover any object at ſea, which was, beſides, covered with miſt; we could however diſcern a little dark ſpot, in the diſtance, like a cloud, which we were told was the iſle of Amber, about a quarter of a league from the land. From the obſcurity of the morning, we could only diſtinguiſh the line of coaſt where we were, and the craggy points of ſome of the mountains, in the interior part of the

the iſland; which appeared from time to time, in the midſt of the clouds which floated round them.

About ſeven o'clock, we heard the ſound of drums in the wood; it was the Governor, M. de la Bourdonaye, who came on horſe-back, followed by a detachment of ſoldiers with their muſkets, and a great number of the white inhabitants and negroes. He ordered the men to draw up in a line upon the ſhore, and to diſcharge all their pieces at once. As ſoon as they had fired, we perceived a light upon the ſea, which was immediately ſucceeded by the report of a cannon. We judged from thence that the veſſel was very near, and we all ran to the ſide where we had ſeen the light. We could then diſcern through the miſt, the hulk and rigging of a large veſſel. We

were

were ſo near to it, that, notwithſtanding the roaring of the waves, we could hear the whiſtle of the boatſwain, directing the men, and the three chears of the ſailors, who cried out, "Vive le Roi!" for it is the exclamation of the French in great danger, as well as in times of rejoicing; as if they called upon their prince to aſſiſt them in their diſtreſs, or wiſhed to expreſs that they were ready to die for his ſervice.

From the time that the St. Gerand perceived that there were people on the ſhore ready to aſſiſt her, ſhe did not ceaſe to fire guns every three minutes.

M. de la Bourdonaye ordered great fires to be made along the ſands, and ſent to all the inhabitants in the neighbourhood for proviſions, planks, ropes, and empty barrels; and numbers of them arrived

arrived ſoon after, followed by their negroes, loaded with every thing which might poſſibly be uſeful in this diſtreſs; not only from the ſettlements in Poudre d'or, but from the diſtrict of Flacque, and the river of the rampart. One of the oldeſt inhabitants went up to the Governor, and told him, that he had heard hollow ſounds in the mountain; that in the woods he had obſerved the leaves to ſhake without wind; and that the ſea-birds had come to land for refuge: all which were certain ſigns of an approaching hurricane. "My good neighbours," ſaid the Governor, "we expect it, and have prepared for it as well as we can; and the veſſel alſo has, without doubt, taken all the precautions that are poſſible."

In fact, there was every preſage of tempeſtuous weather. The clouds

clouds in the zenith were of portentous black in the middle, and fringed with angry red. The air reſounded with the cries of tropic and man-of war birds, Indian terns, and multitude of ſea-fowl, which, notwithſtanding the darkneſs of the atmoſphere, came from every quarter of the horizon to ſeek ſhelter on the iſland.

Towards nine o'clock, tremendous ſounds, like peals of thunder and cataracts of water, were heard off the ſhore. All preſent cried out, "The hurricane! The hurricane!" and in a moment, a furious whirlwind ſwept away the fog which hung over the iſle of Amber and its channel. The St. Gerand was then diſtinctly ſeen; her deck crowded with people; her mainmaſt cut away; her flag reverſed; with four cables at the prow, and one at the ſtern. She had

had anchored between the iſle of Amber and the main land, within the circle of breakers, with which the Iſle of France is ſurrounded, and which ſhe had got through in a place where no veſſel had ever paſſed before. Her head was turned to the tide, and each freſh roll of the ſea heaved her prow, and lifted her keel above the water; the ſame motion ſunk her whole ſtern, and we loſt ſight of her as if ſhe had been ſwallowed up. In this ſituation, with wind and tide driving her towards the land, it was impoſſible ſhe could get back the way ſhe came, or, by cutting her cables, venture to run upon the ſands, on account of the banks and breakers which intervened. Every wave which broke againſt the ſhore, drove with fury up to the extremity of the creeks, and bounding over the cliffs, threw broad

broad ſheets of water in upon the land to the diſtance of fifty feet, and then retiring again, the coaſt was left dry ; and the pebbles rolling violently back with the tide, added a hoarſe and horrid ſound to the roaring of the water. The wind increaſing the ſwell, the ſea ran higher every moment, and the whole channel was one ſheet of white foam, divided only by dark hollows: this foam was heaped up to the height of ſix feet in the bays ; and the wind, which ſwept its ſurface, carried large flakes of it over the country, like a horizontal ſnow driven from the ſea to the foot of the mountains. The whole atmoſphere threatened a long continuance of ſtorm ; the ſea and ſky were ſcarcely diſtinguiſhable from each other. Vaſt volumes of clouds, of portentous appearance, were continually detach-

ed

ed from the maſs, and whirled acroſs the zenith with the utmoſt velocity; whilſt others remained fixed and immoveable as rocks. No tint of blue appeared in the firmament; but a livid, tawny light tinged all the objects of land, and ſea, and air.

In the heel of the ſhip, what we apprehended came to paſs. The cables a-head gave way; and there being only one left at the ſtern, ſhe was thrown upon the rocks, half a cable-length from the ſhore. There was then one univerſal cry of diſtreſs amongſt us. Paul would have thrown himſelf into the ſea; but I ſeized him by the arm, and ſaid, "My dear friend! would you deſtroy yourſelf?" "Let me go to her aſſiſtance, or let me periſh!" he anſwered. As his deſpair took away all reaſon, Domingo and I, to prevent his deſtruction;

ſtruction, tied a long cord round his waiſt, and held the end of it. Paul then advanced towards the St. Gerand, ſometimes ſwimming, ſometimes climbing upon the reef, and was not without hopes of getting on board; for, in the irregularity of its motions, the ſea retired at different intervals, and left the veſſel nearly upon dry land, ſo that one might almoſt have walked round her; but it inſtantly returned with double fury, and overwhelmed her with vaſt volumes of water, and daſhed the unfortunate Paul back upon the ſtrand, half drowned, his legs bleeding, and his breaſt torn and bruiſed. No ſooner did he recover his reſpiration, than he returned with increaſing ardour towards the veſſel, which was now going to pieces, unable any longer to reſiſt the violence of the ſhocks. The hopeleſs

leſs crew threw themſelves into the ſea upon the maſts and planks, upon hen-coops, tables, and empty barrels: and then appeared, in the gallery of the St. Gerand, and object of everlaſting pity and regret! A female figure, extended her arms towards the man who was making ſuch efforts to go to her aſſiſtance.—It was Mary—and, by his intrepidity, ſhe had diſcovered her beloved Paul. The ſight of this charming woman, in a ſituation ſo full of horror, filled all the beholders with grief. As for her with the moſt perfect calmneſs and fortitude, ſhe made ſigns to us, and waved her hands to bid us farewell for ever. All the ſailors had now left the veſſel; one only remained upon the deck, naked, and ſtrong as Hercules. He reſpectfully approached Mary: we ſaw him throw himſelf upon his knees,

knees, and try even to diveſt her of her cloaths; but ſhe turned away her head, and with mild dignity put him from her. All the ſpectators doubled their cries of "Save her! Save her! Don't leave her!" But in the ſame inſtant a mountainous ſea was forced with double fury up the channel, and threatened immediate deſtruction to the veſſel—at its dread approach the ſailor plunged alone into the water; and Mary, ſeeing inevitable death before her, drew her cloaths about her with one hand, and held the other to her heart; and, raiſing her ſerene eyes to heaven, appeared like an angel ready to aſcend to his native ſkies.

O day of woe! Alas, all was in a moment ſwallowed up and loſt. The ſurge drove far back upon the beach ſuch of the ſpectators as had been led by their humanity to

to advance towards Mary, as well as the ſailor who had wiſhed to ſave her by ſwimming. This man, miraculouſly eſcaped from death, kneeled upon the ſands, and gave thanks to God for having preſerved his life; "which, alas!" ſaid he, "I would have freely given to have ſaved that lovely lady, who would not be prevailed upon to undreſs as we did." Domingo and I drew the wretched Paul out of the water ſenſeleſs; the blood ſtreaming from his mouth and ears. The Governor gave them into the care of the ſurgeons; and we ſearched along the ſands, to ſee if the body of Mary might haply have been thrown upon the ſhore; but the wind having ſuddenly ſhifted, as it very commonly does in theſe hurricanes, we had the additional regret of thinking that we ſhould not be able to pay our laſt

laſt duties to the unfortunate Mary. We left the place in all the conſternation of grief; and, in a wreck where ſo many had periſhed, the loſs of one individual ſeemed to engroſs the thoughts of all preſent. Many, from having ſeen the fatal end of ſuch unſpotted innocence, doubted even if there could exiſt a Providence; for there are misfortunes ſo dreadful and ſo undeſerved, that even the hope of the faithful may be ſhaken.

In the mean time, Paul, who began to ſhew ſigns of returning ſenſe, was carried to a neighbouring houſe, till he ſhould be ſufficiently recovered to be ſent home. I went back with Domingo, to prepare the mother of Mary and her friend for this bitter misfortune. When we were near the entrance of the valley of the river Latana, we met ſome negroes, who

informed us, that the tide had driven a great number of planks, and other parts of the wreck, into the oppoſite bay. We turned back immediately, and went down to it, and one of the firſt objects that I beheld upon the ſhore was the body of Mary, half covered with ſand, and exactly in the attitude in which we had laſt ſeen her. Her features were not ſenſibly altered. Her eyes were cloſed; yet there was a ſerenity ſtill upon her countenance; but the pale purple of death was mixed with the bluſh of virgin modeſty. One hand ſtill held her cloaths; the other, which was preſſed to her boſom, was cloſed and ſtiff. It was with ſome difficulty that I opened it, and took out a little box: but what were my ſenſations when I found that it contained the picture of Paul, which ſhe had promiſed never

ver to part with whilſt ſhe had life! At ſight of this laſt proof of love and conſtancy I wept bitterly. Poor Domingo beat his breaſt, and pierced the air with his cries.—We carried her to the houſe of a fiſherman, and gave ſome Malabar women charge of her.

Whilſt they were occupied in ſome of the laſt ſad offices, we went up to the cottages, in the greateſt agitation of mind. We found Madame de la Tour and Margaret praying, and waiting in anxious expectation for news of the veſſel. As ſoon as Madame de la Tour ſaw me, ſhe called out, "Where is my child? my dear child?" and when, by my ſilence and my tears, ſhe could no longer doubt of her loſs, ſhe was ſeized with ſuffocation, and all the agonies of grief, and of deſpair. Margaret eagerly cried, "Where

is my ſon ? I do not ſee my ſon !" and ſhe fainted away ; we ran to her, and, having brought her to herſelf, I aſſured her that Paul was ſafe, and that the Governor had given orders that he ſhould have every attention paid to him. As ſoon as ſhe recovered, ſhe was engroſſed by her attendance upon her friend, who fell into long fits of fainting, and paſſed a dreadful night. From theſe long and ſevere attacks, I judged that no grief is equal to that of a mother for her child. When her ſenſes returned, ſhe raiſed her fixed and melancholy eyes to heaven. In vain her friend and I preſſed her hands between ours ; in vain we ſtrove to awaken her attention to us by the tendereſt expreſſions ; ſhe remained inſenſible to all the tokens of our long friendſhip, and no ſound but of

deep

deep and heavy ſighs came from her oppreſſed boſom.

In the morning, Paul was laid in a palanquin and brought home. He had recovered his ſenſes; but had not been able to utter a word. His interview with his mother and Madame de la Tour, which I had at firſt apprehended, was productive of more good effects than any thing which I had tried before. A gleam of comfort appeared upon the countenance of the two afflicted mothers. They both ſat down by him, took him in their arms, kiſſed him; and their tears, which had been ſuſpended by the exceſs of their grief, now began to flow. Paul ſoon mixed his tears with theirs: and, after nature had been thus relieved, their paſſionate grief ſubſided, and they fell into a ſtate of ſtupefaction and torpor, which

continued a long time, and procured them a ſort of lethargic repoſe, which may indeed be compared to that of death.

M. de la Bourdonaye ſent privately to acquaint me, that the body of Mary had been removed to the town by his order, and that from thence it would be carried to the church of Pamplemouſſe. I went immediately down to Port Lewis, where I found the inhabitants aſſembled together from all parts of the country to attend the funeral. The veſſels in the port had their yards croſſed, their flags reverſed, and they fired cannon at long intervals. The grenadiers walked firſt in the proceſſion, with their muſkets inclined. Their drums, covered with long crapes, returned a deep and melancholy ſound; and dejection was in the looks of thoſe veterans,

who

who had ſo often met danger with a firm and ſteady countenance. Eight young women, the daughters of the moſt conſiderable families, dreſſed in white, and with branches of palm in their hands, carried the remains of their innocent companion, adorned with flowers; next came a number of children ſinging hymns in chorus; after them walked all the principal perſons of the iſland, the officers and magiſtrates belonging to the town; and, laſtly, the Governor, followed by a multitude of the populace. This was what had been appointed by Government, to ſhew all poſſible honour and reſpect for her memory. But when the proceſſion came to the foot of this mountain, when they ſaw theſe cottages, of which ſhe had been the delight, and which her death now filled with deſpair, all the funeral

neral pomp was forgotten; the hymns and pſalms ceaſed to be ſung; and in their ſtead nothing was heard but lamentation. A number of young girls came down from different parts of the country, to touch the bier with handkerchiefs, and chaplets, and wreaths of flowers, with the veneration which they would have ſhewn for the holy relics of a ſaint. Mothers ſupplicated Heaven that their daughters might imitate her virtues. The young men deſired to be bleſſed with love ſo conſtant. The poor prayed for ſuch a friend, and ſlaves for ſo kind a miſtreſs.

Arrived at the place of interment, the female negroes of Madagaſcar, and the Caffrarians of Moſambica, depoſited baſkets of fruit round the bier, and hung pieces of ſtuffs upon the neighbouring trees, according to the cuſtom

cuſtom of their country. The Indian women of Bengal, and of the Malabar coaſt, brought cages full of birds, to which they gave their liberty, releaſing them over her coffin, and letting them fly — ſo touching to all nations is the loſs of an amiable woman; and round the tomb of unfortunate virtue, all religions are united!

There were guards placed round the grave, and they were obliged to keep back ſome of the daughters of the poor, who were ready to throw themſelves into it, ſaying, that they had loſt their only friend, and that they would follow her, for they had no hope left upon earth.

She was buried near the church of Pamplemouſſe, on the weſtern ſide, under ſome bamboos, where ſhe had been accuſtomed to repoſe herſelf

herſelf, after ſhe had been at maſs with her mother and Margaret, ſeated by the ſide of him, whom ſhe then called brother.

After the funeral ceremony was over, M. de la Bourdonaye called to ſee the family, attended by part of his numerous retinue. He offered to Madame de la Tour and Margaret, every aſſiſtance in his power. He ſaid a few words, expreſſive of his indignation againſt her unnatural aunt; and then, going up to Paul, he ſaid every thing which he thought might be moſt capable of giving him comfort. "Heaven knows," ſaid he, "that I only wiſhed to promote your happineſs and the happineſs of the whole family. You muſt go to France, my young friend; I will take care that you ſhall have a commiſſion in the army; and, in your abſence, I

will

will have as much attention to your mother as if ſhe was my own;" and he took hold of his hand; but Paul withdrew it, and turned away his head.

As for me, I ſtayed in the houſe with my afflicted friends, that I might give them every aſſiſtance that I was capable of. At the end of three weeks, Paul had ſo far recovered as to be able to walk; but his grief increaſed with his ſtrength. He appeared inſenſible to every thing; his eyes were extinct, and when we ſpoke to him, he did not anſwer. Madame de la Tour, languid and almoſt exhauſted, often ſaid, "My dear ſon, as long as you continue with me, I think that I behold Mary." The ſound of her name always occaſioned a tremor, and he left them, in ſpite of his mother's entreaties, who requeſted him to ſtay

with

with her friend. He uſed to go to the foot of Mary's coco-tree, and ſit with his eyes fixed upon her fountain. The Governor's ſurgeon, who had attended him and the ladies with the greateſt care, told us, that the moſt probable means of relieving him from the gloomy ſtate of mind into which he was fallen, was to let him purſue his own inclinations, without contradicting him in any thing; and that it was the only way by which we could hope to conquer his mournful and determined ſilence.

I determined to follow his advice. The firſt uſe that Paul made of his returning health, was to go to a diſtance from home. As I never loſt ſight of him, I ſet out immediately after him, and told Domingo to take ſome proviſions, and to follow us. As he deſcended the

the hill, his ſtrength and ſpirits ſeemed to be renewed. He turned directly to the road which leads to Pamplemouſſe; and when he was near the church, in the avenue of bamboos, he went ſtrait to the place where he ſaw that the earth had been lately removed: there he kneeled down, and, raiſing his eyes to heaven, he made a long prayer. From this proceeding I conceived good hopes that he would recover to a ſane mind; for his devotion to the Supreme Being ſhewed that his thoughts were taking their natural courſe. Domingo and I followed his example, and kneeled, and prayed with him. He afterwards went towards the northern ſide of the iſland, and walked on without much attending to us. As I was ſure that he did not know that the body of Mary had been found, much leſs where it had been interred,

interred, I ventured to aſk him what particular reaſon he had for praying under the bamboos; he only anſwered, " We have been there ſo often together !"

He continued his way to the entrance of the foreſt ; there, being overtaken by the night, we were obliged to ſtop, and I prevailed upon him to take ſome nouriſhment; we afterwards lay down at the foot of a tree, and ſlept upon the graſs. The next day I thought that he had ſome inclination to go back ; for he looked for ſome time towards the church of Pamplemouſſe, and her long avenues of bamboo, and made a few ſteps as if he was going that way ; but he ſuddenly turned about, and ruſhed into the foreſt, continuing his courſe to the north. I then began to gueſs his intention, and in vain endeavoured to divert

him

him from it. We came about noon to the diſtrict of Poudre d'or. He deſcended with a quick ſtep to the ſea-ſhore, oppoſite to the place where the St. Gerand had been loſt. When he came within view of the iſle of Amber and the Channel, which was then ſmooth as glaſs, he cried out, " Mary! My dear Mary!" and ſunk down without ſenſe upon the ground. Domingo and I carried him into the interior part of the wood, and with ſome difficulty recovered him. When his ſenſes were reſtored, he would have gone again to the coaſt; but, having entreated him not to renew his grief and ours by ſuch cruel recollections, he took another road. In this manner he continued for a whole week, wandering from place to place, and viſiting all the ſpots where he remembered to have been with

with the companion of his childhood. He went through the bye paths to the Black River, the ſame way which he had gone with Mary, when ſhe ſolicited the pardon of the mulatto ſlave; and from thence to the banks of the river of Three Breaſts, where ſhe ſat down, unable to walk any farther; and then to that part of the wood where they loſt themſelves. Every ſpot which recalled to his mind her amuſements, her cares, her beneficence, her repaſts—the river of the Long Mountain, my little hut, the neighbouring water-fall, the papayer which ſhe had planted, the turf on which ſhe uſed to run, the openings in the wood where ſhe delighted to ſing, all by turns excited his grief; and the ſame echoes which had ſo often returned the ſounds of their joy, now only

repeated

repeated theſe melancholy accents —" Mary! My dear Mary!"

In this wild and wandering life, his eyes ſunk, his lips grew wan, and his health declined. Well convinced that the memory of paſt pleaſures increaſes the ſenſe of preſent evil, and that the paſſions have a double force in ſolitude, I reſolved to remove my unfortunate friend from the ſcenes which ſo continually reminded him of his loſs, and to take him to thoſe parts of the iſland where there was moſt diſſipation. For this purpoſe I went with him to the inhabited heights in the diſtrict of Williams, where he had never been. Agriculture and commerce made this a ſcene of great buſineſs and variety. There were companies of carpenters employed, ſome in ſquaring the timber, others ſawing the planks; carriages coming and going

going on the roads; herds of cattle and great numbers of horſes feeding in extenſive paſtures, and the country full of houſes and villages. From the high ſituation of the ground, many of the vegetable productions of Europe ſucceed there; and we ſaw crops of wheat in different parts of the plain, large beds of ſtrawberries in the open ſpaces of the woods, and roſe-hedges along the roads. The coolneſs of the air tends to brace the nerves, and is reckoned ſalutary to the Europeans. From theſe heights, which occupy the center of the iſland, and are ſurrounded by vaſt woods, there are no views of the ſea, or of Port Lewis, or Pamplemouſſe, or of any thing that could recall the loſt Mary to his mind. Even the mountains, which are varied, and divided into different branches on

the ſide of Port Lewis, on the plains of Williams appear only as one long perpendicular cliff, ſurmounted by high pyramids of rock, where the clouds often reſt.

It was to theſe plains that I conducted Paul. I kept him in continual motion. I walked with him in the heat, and in the rain, in the night, and in the day; purpoſely loſing him in the woods and fields, and newly-cultivated grounds, in hopes to relieve his mind by fatiguing his body, and to engage his attention for a moment, by the difficulty of finding our way, and our ignorance of the places in which we were. But the beloved object is every where preſent to the lover: neither night, nor day, neither the calm of ſolitude, nor the buſy ſcenes of the world, nor even time itſelf, which fades ſo many images, has power to remove

her

her idea from him: like the needle, which, however it may be agitated, always turns to the pole when it ſubſides. I aſked Paul, when we were loſt in the plains of Williams, which way we ſhould go: he turned to the North, and ſaid, "Thoſe are our mountains; let us go back to them."

I found that all my efforts to diſſipate his thoughts were ineffectual, and that I had no reſource left but to try, with all the efforts of my feeble reaſon, to make his paſſion act againſt itſelf: I therefore ſaid to him, "Yes, thoſe are the mountains where your dear Mary lived, and this is the portrait that you gave her, and which dying ſhe preſſed to her heart, whoſe laſt pulſe beat for you." And at the ſame time I held out to him the little picture which he had given to Mary under the

coco-trees. He paſſionately ſeized it with his feeble hands, and put it to his lips. His reſpiration became oppreſſed, and his eyes grew red with tears which could not flow.

" My dear friend," I ſaid to him, " liſten to me who love you, who loved Mary, and who, in the midſt of all your young hope, endeavoured to fortify your mind againſt the unforeſeen calamities of life. What is it that you deplore with ſuch bitterneſs of grief? Is it your own misfortune? or, is it Mary's?

" Your's is indeed great. You have loſt the moſt lovely of women, who would have become the moſt excellent of wives. She had ſacrificed her intereſts to yours, and, in preference to fortune, had choſen you, as the only reward adequate to her virtues. But, inſtead

ſtead of proving the ſource of pure and diſintereſted happineſs to you, ſhe might have been the cauſe of infinite miſery. She was diſinherited, and without reſource. You muſt have ſupported yourſelf and her by hard labour. Rendered more delicate by her education, and her force of mind even increaſed by difficulty, you would have ſeen her ſinking by degrees under her efforts to leſſen your fatigue. If ſhe had had children, it would have augmented all your cares. How would it have been poſſible for you to have maintained a young family, and your parents far advanced in years?"

"You may ſay, that the Governor would have aſſiſted you; but, in a colony where the adminiſtration is continually changing, you could not always expect to have ſuch men as M. de la Bourdonaye.

donaye. There might have been Governors without morals, without principles, to whom your wife would have been obliged to pay court, in order to obtain a paltry ſupply. If ſhe had been diſcreet, you would probably have remained poor—and even happy if her beauty and her virtue had not ſubjected you to the perſecution of thoſe from whom you expected aſſiſtance!

" ' There is,' you will ſay, ' a happineſs, independent of fortune, the happineſs of protecting the object of our affections, whoſe attachment is increaſed by diſtreſs. By the exceſs of my anxiety ſhe would have felt conſoled; my ſufferings would have made her forget her own.' Theſe, I allow, are a ſort of bitter pleaſures, which love and virtue are capable of enjoying.—But ſhe is no more; there remains,

remains, however, what next to yourſelf ſhe held deareſt; your mother, and her own—who will be brought to the grave by your inconſolable grief. Let it be the pleaſure of your life, as it was of her's, to attend upon them and ſupport them. Beneficence is the delight of the virtuous; it is the greateſt and moſt ſecure of all earthly happineſs. The ſchemes of eaſe, enjoyment, ambition, luxury, are not made for the tranſitory life of feeble man. Into what miſery have we been plunged, from one ſtep only in purſuit of riches! You, it is true, oppoſed it; but who would not have expected the voyage of Mary to have terminated in the happineſs of you both? The invitation of a rich and aged relation; the counſel of an enlightened Governor; the approbation of a whole colony;

lony; the exhortations and authority of a prieſt, decided her fate—and it thus we run to our own deſtruction, led into error by the prudence even of thoſe by whoſe opinions we are governed. It would have been better, no doubt, not to have liſtened to them; not to have truſted to the promiſes of a deceitful world. But, after all, among the number of thoſe who go to India in queſt of riches, or who remain at home and enjoy the luxuries which are brought back to Europe—among all the individuals whom we now ſee working in this plain—there is not one who is not deſtined ſome day to loſe what is moſt dear to him; grandeur, riches, wife, children, friends. Moſt of them, in addition to their loſs, may have the pain of thinking that they contributed to their misfortunes by their own folly.

But you, when you examine your own heart, can have nothing to reproach yourſelf with. You have been truly faithful; and, by not departing from the ſentiments of nature, you acted with the wiſdom of age, in the flower of your youth. Your views alone were without error, becauſe they were pure, ſimple, diſintereſted, and that your right to Mary was a ſacred right which no fortune could balance. You have loſt her; and it is not by your imprudence, or by the falſe wiſdom of the world, or your deſire of gain, that you are deprived of her; but by the hand of Providence, which employed the paſſions of others to take from you the object of your affections; and Heaven, the author and giver of all good, knows what is beſt for you, and now leaves you no cauſe for that repentance

pentance and deſpair, which we feel for evils that we have brought upon ourſelves.

" You may, in your affliction, ſay, I have not deſerved it. Is it then the misfortune of Mary, her death, or her preſent ſtate, that you deplore? Her fate is the ſame that birth, and beauty, and even empire muſt ſubmit to. When ſhe came into the world, ſhe was condemned to die: and ſhe is to be accounted happy that the bonds of life were diſſolved before ſhe loſt her mother, your's, before ſhe loſt you—by which ſhe would have ſuffered many deaths before the laſt!

" Death, my dear friend, is a bleſſing to all—it is the night of this reſtleſs day, which is called life—the ſleep, which for ever eaſes us from pain, and ſickneſs, and ſorrow, and all the doubts

and fears which inceſſantly agitate the living. Examine thoſe whoſe lot appears the moſt to be envied: you will find that they have very dearly bought their boaſted happineſs; reputation in the world has been purchaſed perhaps by domeſtic evils; riches, by loſs of health; the fortunate and rare bleſſing of being beloved, by continual ſacrifices; and often, at the end of a life which has been devoted to others, they ſee themſelves ſurrounded only by intereſted friends and ungrateful relations. But Mary's lot was unchanged to the laſt; ſhe was happy, whilſt ſhe remained with us, by the bleſſings of nature, and after ſhe had left us, by her virtues: and even in that awful moment when ſhe periſhed in our ſight, ſhe might ſtill be accounted happy; for, whichever way ſhe caſt her eyes, ſhe

ſhe ſaw herſelf the object of affection; whether towards you, who were, with ſuch intrepidity ſtriving to go to her aſſiſtance, or to a whole colony, anxious and trembling for her ſafety. Conſcious of her innocence, ſhe looked forward to futurity without diſmay, and ſhe received the reward which is reſerved for the virtuous; for Heaven gave her fortitude, which raiſed her above danger; and ſhe met death with a firm and ſerene countenance.

" The different events of life are trials, by which Heaven proves the virtuous, and ſhews that they alone can profit by them, and turn them to their glory and honour. Thoſe who are deſtined to illuſtrious fame, are raiſed to ſome exalted and conſpicuous ſituation, and have to combat againſt death: their courage then ſerves as an example,

example, and poſterity pays the tribute of their tears to the memory of their misfortunes. This everlaſting monument is reſerved for them, in a world where all periſhes and vaniſhes away, and in which the fame of kings is ſoon buried in oblivion.

" But Mary ſtill exiſts. Every thing changes upon earth; but nothing is loſt. All the art of man could not annihilate the ſmalleſt particle of matter; and is it poſſible that what poſſeſſed reaſon, benevolence, love, virtue, piety, ſhould have periſhed, when the elements which compoſed the outward form that contained it, cannot be deſtroyed? Oh! if Mary was happy whilſt ſhe was with us, ſhe is much more ſo now. There is a Supreme Being, my dear friend: all nature bears witneſs of him; I have no need of arguments to

prove

prove it to you. Nothing but the wickedneſs of men, can make them deny the eternal Juſtice which they have reaſon to fear. The ſentiment of his exiſtence is in your heart, as his works are before your eyes. Can you believe then, that Mary has been left unrewarded? Can you ſuppoſe that the ſame Power, which encloſed her exalted ſoul in a form ſo beautiful, that it beſpoke its divine original, could not have ſaved her from the waves? That he who regulated the preſent happineſs of man, according to laws which we do not comprehend, cannot prepare a future ſtate of happineſs for her, according to laws that are equally unknown to us? When we were yet uncreated, if we had been capable of thought, could we have formed any idea of our preſent exiſtence? and, now that

that we are in this dark and tranſitory life, can we forſee what is beyond the gates of death, through which we muſt neceſſarily paſs when we go out of it? Does the Creator want this little globe for the diſplay of his wiſdom and goodneſs, like feeble man; and, can the human race be only multiplied in the fields of death? There is not a drop of water in the ocean, which does not teem with living creatures that bear affinity to ourſelves; and, is it poſſible, that in the number of planets which roll over our heads, there ſhould be nothing which has any relation to us? Is the Supreme Wiſdom and Beneficence limited to the ſpot which we inhabit? and, can thoſe innumerable and ſhining worlds, and the ſurrounding fields of light which no darkneſs can obſcure, be an empty uſeleſs ſpace,

an

an eternal vacuum! If we, who of ourſelves have nothing, ſhould dare to aſſign limits to that Power from whoſe hands we have received every thing, we might think that we were here upon the boundary of his empire, where life combats againſt death, and innocence againſt tyranny.

" Without doubt there ſomewhere exiſts a place where virtue receives its reward, and Mary is happy. Oh! if ſhe could now ſpeak to you, ſhe would ſay, as ſhe did when ſhe left you: ' O Paul, life is only a trial. I have been obedient to the laws of nature, of love, and of virtue. I croſſed the ſeas in obedience to my relations; I renounced wealth, and preſerved my faith to you, and my innocence to the laſt. It pleaſed Heaven to finiſh my courſe. I have eſcaped for ever from all the difficulties, the

ſtorms, the miſeries of life, and the ſight of the ſufferings of others. None of the evils which threaten man can henceforth reach me; and you pity me! I am pure and unchangeable as a particle of light; and you would call me back to the darkneſs of the world?—O Paul! O my dear friend! remember thoſe days of delight, when Heaven ſeemed to open with the ſun upon the pikes of the mountain, and ſpread through the foreſt with his rays; we felt an enchantment of which we did not know the cauſe. In the innocence of our hearts we wiſhed to be all ſight, to behold the beautiful colours of the dawn; all ſmell, to enjoy the fragrance of our plants; all ear, to hear the melody of the birds; and all ſoul, to expreſs our gratitude for ſuch bleſſings. Now, placed at the ſource from which every thing that

is lovely upon earth is derived, my mind enjoys, and ſees, and hears, and touches, without intervention, what formerly could only be made preſent to me through the medium of feeble organs. Oh! what language could deſcribe thoſe coaſts of eternal day, which are my habitation for ever! All that infinite power and celeſtial goodneſs could create to conſole a ſuffering being; all that the affection of innumerable ſpirits, partaking of the ſame unſpeakable bliſs, can give of harmony to our general happineſs, we enjoy pure and unalloyed. Support your preſent trial, that hereafter you may ſtill add to the felicity of your Mary, by love which ſhall know no end, by a Hymen whoſe torch can never more be extinguiſhed. Then I will calm your regrets; then I ſhall wipe away your tears. O, my friend!

friend! my eſpouſed! raiſe your ſoul to eternity, that you may be enabled to bear the ſufferings of a moment."

From the emotion I felt myſelf, I ceaſed to ſpeak. Paul, looking ſtedfaſtly at me, cried out, "She is no more! ſhe is no more!" and a long oppreſſion ſucceeded theſe melancholy words. Afterwards, when he was a little recovered, he ſaid, "Since death then is a bleſſing, and that Mary is happy, I will die alſo, and go to her." All that I had ſuggeſted for his conſolation, had therefore only tended to nouriſh his deſpair. I was like a man endeavouring to ſave his friend who has fallen into the water, and who abſolutely refuſes to ſwim. Grief had overwhelmed him. Alas! it is the ſufferings of the firſt years which prepare a man to enter into life,

and

and Paul had never experienced any.

I brought him home. I found his mother and Madame de la Tour in a ſtate of langour, which had increaſed during our abſence.—Margaret appeared to be the moſt dejected. Thoſe characters which, from vivacity of temper, paſs lightly over common misfortunes, are the ſooneſt overcome by great afflictions.

"O my good neighbour!" ſaid ſhe, "I thought, in my dreams laſt night, that I ſaw Mary clad in white, walking in delightful woods and gardens. She told me that ſhe enjoyed unſpeakable happineſs; and then, coming towards Paul with a ſmiling countenance, ſhe took him away with her. Whilſt I was endeavouring to detain my ſon, I felt myſelf quitting the earth, and with a ſenſation of pleaſure

ſure that I cannot deſcribe. I turned to take leave of my friend, and ſaw her following, with Frances and Domingo. But, what is ſtill more remarkable, Madame de la Tour had a dream this ſame night, which reſembled mine in almoſt every circumſtance."

"My dear friend," I anſwered, "nothing can happen upon this earth without the permiſſion of Heaven. Dreams ſometimes announce the truth."

Madame de la Tour related to me the dread ſhe had had the night before, which differed but little from that of Margaret. I had never obſerved, in either of my friends, any tendency to ſuperſtition; I was the more ſtruck therefore with the coincidence of theſe dreams, and I doubted not, in my own mind, that they would be realiſed. That the truth is

ſometimes revealed to us during our ſleep, is an opinion which has prevailed amongſt all the nations of the earth. It has been believed by the greateſt characters of antiquity; amongſt others, by Alexander, Cæſar, the two Scipio's, the two Cato's, and Brutus, who certainly had not a weak mind. Both the Old and the New Teſtament furniſh many examples of dreams which have been fulfilled. For myſelf, I have need only of my own experience to convince me, that dreams are admonitions, which we receive from ſome intelligent being for our good. But it is not poſſible either to defend or to refute by arguments, things which ſurpaſs human underſtanding.—However, if the reaſon of man is but an image of that of the Supreme Being; as man is able to convey his intentions by hidden ways

ways from one end of the earth to the other, why may not the Wiſdom, which governs the univerſe, employ like means for the ſame end? A friend ſends conſolation to a friend in a letter, which croſſes various kingdoms, and paſſes through contending nations, and brings hope and joy to one individual; why may not the Protector of innocence communicate comfort, by ſome ſecret method, to the virtuous mind, whoſe only truſt is in him? He needs no outward ſigns for the execution of his will, who in all his works continually acts by internal powers.

Why ſhould we doubt of dreams? Life itſelf, filled with ſo many vain and tranſitory projects, what is it but a dream?

But be that as it will, the dream of my unfortunate friends was ſoon accompliſhed. Paul died two months

months after the loſs of his beloved Mary, whoſe name he inceſſantly repeated. Margaret ſaw her end approach in a week after that of her ſon, with a ſatisfaction which virtue alone can feel. She took the moſt affectionate leave of Madame de la Tour, in the delightful expectation of meeting her again, never more to part. "Death," ſaid ſhe, "is a bleſſing which one ſhould wiſh for. If life is a puniſhment, one muſt deſire that it ſhould ceaſe: if it is a trial, one muſt hope to have it ſhort."

Government took care of Frances and Domingo, who were no longer able to work, and did not long ſurvive their miſtreſs. Poor Tayo pined away, and died almoſt at the ſame time with his maſter.

I took Madame de la Tour to my houſe; ſhe ſupported herſelf, in the midſt of theſe dreadful loſſes, with

with incredible fortitude. She comforted Paul and Margaret to the laſt moment, as if ſhe had had no affliction but theirs to endure. When they were taken from her, ſhe talked to me of them every day, as of beloved friends who were in the neighbourhood: however, ſhe outlived them but a few weeks.—As to her aunt, far from accuſing her as the author of her misfortunes, ſhe prayed to Heaven to pardon her, and to calm the reſtleſs diſorder of mind into which ſhe had fallen immediately after ſhe had ſo inhumanly ſent Mary away.

The cruelty of this unnatural woman was ſoon puniſhed. I heard, by means of ſeveral veſſels which ſucceſſively arrived, that ſhe was tormented by a diſtreſsful ſtate of ſpirits, which made her equally incapable of ſupporting life, or bearing

bearing the approach of death. Sometimes ſhe reproached herſelf for the untimely end of the charming Mary, and the loſs of her mother, which was the conſequence of it. Sometimes ſhe applauded herſelf, for having baniſhed from her ſight two wretched beings, who had, ſhe ſaid, diſgraced their family by their mean attachments. Sometimes the crowds of poor, which ſhe ſaw at Paris, gave her an impatience of temper, and ſhe aſked, why they were not ſent to die in the colonies; adding, that the ideas of humanity, religion, virtue, amongſt different nations, were only the inventions of thoſe in power. Then, running into the oppoſite extreme, ſhe gave herſelf up to ſuperſtitious terrors, and carried large ſums to be diſpoſed of in alms by the Monks, who were her directors, intreating them

to

to appeaſe Heaven by the ſacrifice of her whole fortune; as if thoſe riches, which had been refuſed to the unfortune, could be acceptable to the Father of men! Sometimes in her imagination ſhe ſaw countries in flames, and burning mountains, where hideous ſpectres wandered up and down, and with a dreadful voice ſummoned her to join them. She kneeled at the feet of her confeſſors, and invented penances and tortures, to inflict upon herſelf—for eternal juſtice inſpires the cruel with a religion full of terror.

In this manner ſhe paſſed ſeveral years, unbelieving and ſuperſtitious by turns; her life a burthen, and the apprehenſion of death inſupportable.

But the wealth, for which ſhe had ſacrificed the ſentiments of natural affection, was at laſt the cauſe which put an end to her miſerable

ſerable exiſtence. She had the mortification to find, that her fortune would deſcend to relations who were odious to her; ſhe endeavoured therefore to alienate the greateſt part of it; but they, taking advantage of her fits of deſpondency, confined her, upon the pretence of her being diſordered in her ſenſes, and put her eſtate into the hands of truſtees. Thus her deſtruction was compleated by her riches; and, as they had hardened the heart of their poſſeſſor, they alſo made thoſe unnatural who were in expectation of them. At length ſhe died; and, for the completion of wretchedneſs, with ſufficient uſe of her underſtanding to perceive, that ſhe was plundered and deſpiſed by the very perſons whoſe opinions had directed her all her life.

The

The body of Paul was depoſited by the ſide of his beloved Mary, under the ſame reeds; and near them lay their fond mothers and faithful ſervants. No monuments were raiſed upon their humble turfs; no epitaphs were engraved in honour of their virtues: but their memory, never to be effaced, remains imprinted on the hearts of thoſe who experienced their kindneſs. They needed not that pomp in death, which in their lives they had avoided; but, if they are ſtill mindful of what paſſes upon earth, without doubt they delight to viſit the thatched roofs which ſhelter induſtry and virtue; to comfort the poor who repine at their lot; and in young lovers to encourage conſtant affection, ſimple taſtes, love of labour, and dread of riches.

The voice of the people, which is ſilent when monuments are raiſed

raiſed in honour of princes, has given names to ſome parts of this iſland, which will for ever perpetuate the memory of Mary. Near the iſle of Amber, amongſt the rocks, there is a place called the ſtreights of the St. Gerand, which is the name of the veſſel which was wrecked there when it brought her back from Europe. The end of that long neck of land, which you perceive, half under water, about three leagues from hence, and which the St. Gerand could not double the night before the hurricane, in order to gain the port, is called the *Cap Malheureux*; and in front here, at the end of the valley, is the *Baie du Tombeau*, where Mary was found buried in the ſand, as if the ſea had endeavoured to bring back her body to her family, and to render the laſt duties ro her delicacy, upon the ſame ſhores which

ſhe

ſhe had honoured by her innocence.

Oh! unfortunate mothers! children ſo fondly united! beloved family! Theſe woods, which afforded you ſhade; theſe fountains, which flowed for you; theſe hills, where you reclined together, ſtill deplore your loſs. No one has ſince dared to cultivate this deſolate ſpot, or repair theſe humble dwellings. Your goats are become wild; your gardens are deſtroyed; your birds are fled; and there is now no ſound but the ſcreams of hawks, wheeling round the valley. As for me, ſince I have loſt you, I am as a friend who has no friends, as a father bereft of his children, as a traveller wandering alone upon the earth.

IN ſaying theſe words, he aroſe and left me, with tears in his eyes; mine had often flowed in the courſe of his melancholy narration.

FINIS.